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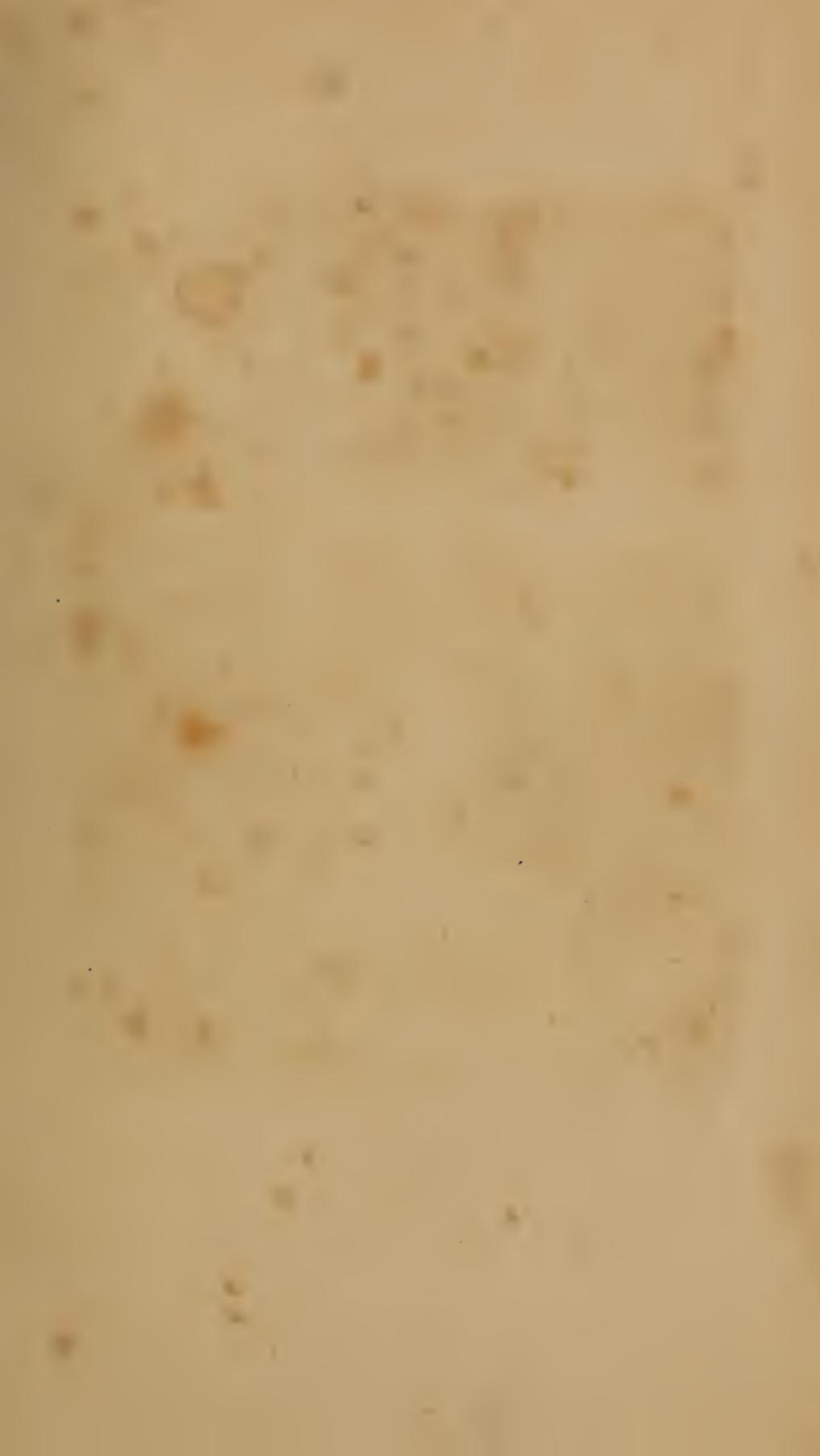
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The Miss Stucklands
with the kind regards, and
best wishes of
The Authors.

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THE
OBLIGATIONS OF LITERATURE

TO THE
MOTHERS OF ENGLAND.





ALADDIN AND THE MAGIC LAMP.

THE
OBLIGATIONS OF LITERATURE
TO THE
MOTHERS OF ENGLAND.

BY

CAROLINE A. HALSTED,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF MARGARET BEAUFORT,"
"INVESTIGATION," &c. &c.



✓ "There is this remarkable in the strong affections of the mother, in the formation of the literary character; that without ever partaking of, or sympathising with the pleasures the child is fond of, the mother will often cherish those first decided tastes, merely from the delight of promoting the happiness of her son; so that genius, which some would produce in a preconceived system, or implant by stratagem, or inforce by application, with her may be only the watchful labour of love."—*D'Israeli on the Literary Character.*

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OBTAINED THE HONORARY PREMIUM

AWARDED BY THE

DIRECTORS OF THE GRESHAM COMMEMORATION.

MDCCCXL.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LOUISA, BARONESS ROLLE.

MADAM,

I CANNOT but feel a degree of pride and pleasure, in dedicating to your Ladyship a work, written with the hope of directing attention to the benefit, which has been effected in a long succession of ages through the influence and example of the Matrons of England.

It would be presumptuous in me to enumerate all the munificent acts which particularly connect your Ladyship's name with the subject of the following pages; but having dwelt within the scene of your benevolence, and been an eye-witness of that zeal in supporting the institutions of our ancestors, which influenced all around you, I may be allowed to point to

churches endowed and supported by the same bountiful hand, that provides for the spiritual welfare and temporal comfort of hundreds of the rising generation ; thus strengthening that bond of union which in this favoured country, makes the orphan and friendless, children by adoption of the noble, the rich, and the powerful.

My gratification in being permitted to place this volume under your protection, rests therefore upon higher grounds than the indulgence of those personal feelings which prompt me to acknowledge with gratitude my deep sense of the kind interest which your Ladyship has ever taken in my literary pursuits.

I have the honour to remain,
Madam,
Your Ladyship's
Obliged and obedient Servant,
CAROLINE A. HALSTED.

*Newlan House, Lymington,
12th March, 1840.*

P R E F A C E.

THE truth conveyed in the title of the present Essay has been long and universally felt; but though customary to acknowledge, in general terms, the Obligations of Literature to Maternal instruction, and Maternal influence, yet the fact has never perhaps been sufficiently proved, by examples.

It would ill become the writer of so humble a work, to take any merit for discoveries, or to presume on having produced new matter for discussion. The design of the Essay must indeed be so manifest that it scarcely needs a preface; but, the subject of education, and the various modes of developing, at the most fitting

period, the energies of the youthful mind, now occupy so much of public attention, that it has induced the author to adopt the present plan to shew the source, whence all permanent instruction must emanate.

The term **MOTHERS OF ENGLAND**, comes home to the hearts of all. Who has not felt its endearing tie? Who has not yielded to its tenderness in infancy, and bowed to its power through life? Who has not pondered over those happy hours, when a Mother's precept was a law,—a Mother's reproof indisputable,—a Mother's tear, nay, a Mother's sigh, the bitterest of earthly sorrow? And will the Matrons of England in the present day, when innovation of all that is sacred and dear to them is unblushingly advocated, when our ancient institutions, our holy Church, the domestic happiness of our country, are openly attacked, and insidiously menaced;—will

the Mothers of England slight or disregard that power, peculiarly their own, which in the most unenlightened days tempered the passions and moulded the character of the English youth, and which in more civilized times has led to the proverbial superiority, and moral excellence of the daughters of Britain, and produced in her sons, some of the noblest characters the world has ever seen. Let it not be supposed that the term, "MOTHERS OF ENGLAND" means only Mothers of a single household. The women of England owe a debt of gratitude to their COUNTRY, in which their sovereignty in domestic life is willingly conceded, and which can only be repaid by rearing the children of the STATE in those several departments which are woman's allotted sphere.

Gratifying indeed is it to see the infant thousands of our native land protected and

instructed by their richer and accomplished countrywomen, who aid with their wealth and judicious counsel the friendless and destitute, — whose powerful example checks vice in the froward, and fosters virtue in the gentle and unobtrusive; and who by their precepts, their goodness, and the unblemished purity of their own lives, diffuse blessings on all around, and aid in the great work of calling from ignorance to a knowledge of the truth, beings destined like themselves for immortality.

At no period could a work, illustrative of Maternal care, appear with more propriety than at the present, when the most striking instance of its effects, is to be found in the highest station. To the judicious instruction of a MOTHER, now reaping the noblest reward of her solicitude, our youthful Queen is indebted for those numerous personal

virtues which impart splendour to her diadem, and secure for her the love and admiration of her people ; while a bright example of moral excellence, and of the purity and perfection of the female mind in more advanced years, is presented to us in the estimable Queen Dowager,—truly a “Mother of England,”—whose admirable public conduct is only equalled by the feminine graces and unobtrusive charity that characterise her private life.

Let it never be forgotten then, that from Mothers emanate those principles which make or destroy the happiness of the child they love. Accomplishments and worldly attainments may be derived from others, but holiness, self-control, forbearance, love of truth, integrity, and all the other virtues of the heart, are only in the Mother’s gift.

To adduce the brightest examples in illus-

tration of these different points, has been the chief object of the following Essay. It is offered to the public with diffidence; yet not without hope that matter so interesting, and which admits of being so considerably enlarged as the “Obligations of Literature to the Mothers of England,” may attract the attention of abler writers, and thus diminish the regret, which the author feels, as she contrasts the imperfections of her work with the importance of the subject.

A R G U M E N T.

INTRODUCTION—Subject proposed—Remarks limited to four principal heads, viz.—I. RELIGION—Early British Christians—Anglo-Saxon Matrons—Anglo-Norman period—Education of English youth by their Mothers during the middle ages—Patronage bestowed by the Queens of England on learned men—Colleges founded in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge by pious and learned women—Free grammar schools—Female Sovereigns, the regal Mothers of England. II. The STATE—Observations on the proposed section—Queens of the Hep-tarchy—Maternal influence exemplified in the after-life of the early English Kings—The age of Chivalry—Character of the English youth influenced by the religious and moral precepts of the Mothers of England—Examples—Foundation of Christ's school—Legislative wisdom of Queen Elizabeth—Apparent in the choice of her ministers. III. SCIENCE—General reflections arising from this division—Great characters exemplifying the powerful effects of Maternal love—Instances adduced of Divines—Statesmen—Philosophers—Historians—Orators—Poets—and the most eminent English Authors. IV. LEARNING GENERALLY—Subject considered in a more enlarged form—Mothers of England in the most extensive sense—Erudite women selected from each reign subsequent to the invention of printing—Compositions of accomplished female writers—their important effect on the minds of the English youth—General review of the subject—Influence of Mothers in after years—Lasting effect of maternal power—General observations—CONCLUSION.

THE
OBLIGATIONS OF LITERATURE
TO THE
MOTHERS OF ENGLAND.

MOTHERS OF ENGLAND!—That noble and endearing appellation, which comprises the highest perfections of our nature, and conveys the loftiest idea of female excellence!—Mothers, who in the exercise of every virtue, and in the performance of every duty may challenge the matrons of all climes, and all ages, with little fear of competition, and no apprehension of rivalry.

Greece boasted of warriors who became

invincible by the precepts and exhortations of heroines, whose maternal solicitude was lost in their patriotic ardor, and whose natural affections were sacrificed to the love of glory; whose bitterest malediction awaited the son who “returned from battle without his shield,” while tears of joy bathed the remains of him who had fallen, overpowered by numbers. The Mother of Brasidas, the renowned Spartan, in honour of whom a yearly festival was instituted by his grateful and admiring countrymen—only inquired whether her son had died bravely. Such traits of the heroic fortitude of Mothers are abundant in antiquity; and as a natural result, it followed that the sole ambition of their sons was to earn the crown of victory, and their unceasing aim from infancy to be distinguished among the heroes of the state.

The Matrons of Rome, stoical, bold, and

resolute, fostered in their children that disregard of death, that daring intrepidity, which eventually rendered them the masters of the world. Enthusiastic in their love for their country, they sank the Mother's feelings in the citizen's devotion to the republic and the laws.

The stern virtues that signalized the Roman legislators, and the heroic courage that animated their warriors, were shared by wives, and cherished by Mothers, with whom compassion was considered a weakness, and humanity little less than a crime. But the profound learning, the studious habits, and that severe mental discipline which formed the basis of the undying fame of the sages of Greece and the philosophers of Rome, are in few instances to be traced to maternal influence.

Cornelia, whom Rome honoured with a

statue, simply inscribed “Cornelia the Mother of the Gracchi,”—and Aurelia the Mother of Julius Cæsar, whose lofty spirit induced the ambition that so early led her son to aspire to the office of Pontiff, and whose anxiety for his success made him exclaim in embracing her—“ You shall this day see me either chief pontiff, or an exile,”—have always been renowned for the services which they rendered their country.

But their offspring were warriors, patriots, and conquerors, whilst our attention must be confined to those who have attained distinction, and benefited their race by the peaceful pursuits of literature ; and where can our thoughts be so satisfactorily directed as to our own country—to our native land ? There we find, together with sages, and philosophers, heroes great as in the ancient time, in martial glory, and far greater in moral virtues,

since their conduct was regulated by the chastening influence of revealed Religion.

It remained for Christian England to boast of Mothers, who, while they inculcated on their children the courage and dauntless energy of the ancient rulers of the world, also infused into their young minds those sentiments of piety, gentleness, and virtue—that mental rectitude, strict principle, and high sense of honour, which have procured for Great Britain universal respect, admiration, and confidence.

Both Greece and imperial Rome vanquished but to enslave and degrade: their dominion could only be purchased by subduing every moral and social feeling in the victims of their insatiable ambition.

England conquers that she may confer the precious boon of freedom upon all who are persecuted and oppressed. She shelters the alien, protects the exile, unshackles the slave;

and while dispensing her charity, imparts the holy treasures of the gospel, and the blessings of civilization to the farthest extremity of the globe.

It is not the prostrate enemy, nor the victor's spoils that gladden the hearts of the Mothers of England; they rejoice in household affection, in deeds of mercy, in acts of self-denial—and glory in their allotted sphere of domestic peace and love. In accordance with this they early animate their infant progeny with those feelings of religion, loyalty and duty,—so emphatically conveyed in the sacred text, “Fear God and honour the King,”¹—which have produced for Great Britain her brightest scholars, her most prudent legislators, and her wisest statesmen.

And what may we ask has produced this union of the good and great, that forms so marked a feature in England’s sons? There

¹ 1 St. Peter, ii. 17.

can be little hesitation respecting the answer. It has its source in the softening effects of true religion on the heart, and springs from the enlightening of the mind consequent on the extension of learning and the increase of knowledge in a free-born and Christian land. And this reply leads us at once to the consideration of "THE OBLIGATIONS OF LITERATURE TO THE MOTHERS OF ENGLAND."

What scope for reflection does the inquiry present! Many are the paths which might be separately chosen as affording facts for retrospection full of interest and advantage; but it is proposed to confine the present remarks under four principal heads:—viz.

I. RELIGION, as connected with the establishment of Christianity.

II. THE STATE, as regards the wisdom of many of her legislators.

III. SCIENCE, from the philosophers whose

eminence has been produced by maternal care and solicitude ; and

IV. LEARNING GENERALLY, for the able productions of erudite women, and for that high tone of moral and religious feeling which characterises the compositions of the most distinguished of England's female writers.

I.—The first point then proposed for consideration, is that of Religion, as connected with the establishment of Christianity :—that pure and holy doctrine which alone can render even the noblest characters truly great, or elevate into real sublimity the loftiest conceptions of the human intellect.

At what period, and by whom the religion of Christ was introduced into England, need not here be discussed. It will be sufficient to state that among the converts to the “ glad

tidings of salvation," during the life of St. Paul, and commemorated by that holy apostle as a favoured disciple,¹ was Claudia, "born among the blue painted Britons."² She was the supposed daughter of Caractacus, and the adopted child of his conqueror Cladius, whence her appellation in accordance with the usage of the times. Her name has been preserved to posterity in the epigrams of Martial, her contemporary at Rome, who eulogises her as the British Matron,³ who was espoused to

¹ "Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and CLAUDIA."—2 Timothy, iv. 21.

² "Claudia, coeruleis cum sit Rufina Britannis
Edita....." *Martial.*

³ "Claudia Rufina, a noble British lady, was the author of a book of epigrams, an elegy on the death of her husband, and other compositions both in verse and prose. Martial, who extols this lady for her virtues, her learning, and her beauty, was the friend of her husband, Aulus Rufus Pudens, a Bononian philosopher, and of the Roman equestrian order."—Hayes, Biog. vol. vi. p. 325.

Rufus,¹ or Pudens, who St. Paul has farther distinguished by the designation of “chosen in the Lord;”² and who, with his fellow-labourer Claudia, there is little doubt was among the number of the “saints,” styled by that apostle “of Cæsar’s household.”³

It being generally allowed that Christianity was brought into Britain during the reign of Arviragus, the son of Caractacus, it becomes more than probable that his illustrious sister, the Christian Claudia, having witnessed the constancy, and been animated by the eloquence and divine inspiration of the great apostle of the Gentiles, with that enthusiastic devotion, which characterised the early disciples, returned to preach “Christ crucified” in her

¹ “Claudia, nupta meo cum sit peregrina Pudenti.”

Martial.

² “Salute RUFUS chosen in the Lord.”—Romans xvi. 13.

³ See Appendix A.

native land, and was an instrument in the hands of Providence to make known the blessings of the gospel that “the isles afar off should see the Lord’s glory.”¹

If this, however, rests chiefly on conjecture it is not so with respect to the obligations of literature to the noble and learned Claudia; for her virtues and acquirements having been made the subject of contemporary verses, both her birth-place, and her marriage with Rufus, are rendered indisputable.²

Pomponia Græcina, wife of the pro-consul Plautius,³ and other eminent British females are said at this period to have embraced Chris-

¹ Isaiah lxvi.

² Considerable light has lately been thrown upon this point of extreme interest by the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles, Canon Residentiary of Salisbury, and vicar of Bremhill, Wilts.

³ Aulus Plautius commanded the expedition which subjected Britain to the Roman arms, A.D. 43.—*Tac. Annal.* xiii. 32.

tianity; and tradition ascribes the foundation and name of the church of Great St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, to the pious and noble St. Helena:¹ she was the daughter of Coilus, a British prince, the sister of Lucius, who founded St. Peter's, Cornhill, the first Christian church in London; the wife of Constantius Chlorus, and the Mother of Constantine the Great, who was born at York, A. D. 272, and was the first Christian Emperor of Rome. This princess, styled in ancient inscriptions “venerabilis piissima Augusta,” was highly accomplished,²

¹ St. Helen, or St. Helena, Mother of Constantine the Great, was of British extraction, and at the age of 80 visited the Holy Land. From her discovery of the true cross, she was reputed a saint, and several churches in different parts of the world were dedicated to her.—*Clavis Calendaria*, vol. i. p. 327.

² “The writings of this princess, among which is a book of Greek verses, are mentioned by Bæleus.”—*Hayes, Biog.* vol. iv. p. 402.

rigidly devout, and by her virtue and piety prepared the mind of her son — “that noble champion of the Christian cause” — to receive those mystic truths for which he has for ages been held in just veneration. The name AUGUSTA, the ancient appellation of London, is stated by some antiquaries to have been bestowed in honour of St. Helena. She has always been reputed a great benefactress to the city, and is said by Camden to have surrounded it with walls; “numbers of her coins,” he adds, “have been discovered beneath them.”

At a subsequent era, when the early churches in Britain had greatly declined, partly on account of the violences of her invading enemies, partly from the cruelties exercised on the Christian converts at the time of the persecution of Dioclesian, in the beginning of the fourth century, the establishment of Christianity was finally effected by the influence of a British

queen Bertha, the consort of Ethelbert, King of Kent, whose zeal for the true faith, and whose irreproachable conduct, were the means of converting her husband, and ten thousand of his people, from the gross idolatry of the Anglo-Saxons; and also of procuring the favourable reception of St. Augustine, the emissary of Pope Gregory the Great, in the year 596.¹

Ethelburga, her daughter, emulating the example, and taught by the precepts of her Mother, carried the apostolic doctrine into Northumberland, and converted both her royal consort, and the northern inhabitants of the island.

The wife of Oswy established Christianity in the Kingdom of Mercia, and though it would occupy too much space to enumerate individually each noble proselyte, yet it is important to the object of the present essay to notice the historical fact, that the royal Matrons of Eng-

¹ See Appendix B.

land had the merit of introducing and firmly establishing the blessings of true religion into the most considerable kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy.¹

The importance of this most signal triumph to literature was incalculable. By the influence of the Christian Bertha, seminaries of learning were instituted in the kingdom of Kent, and about the same period they were introduced also into the kingdom of the East Angles; the monastery of Ely being founded in 673 by Etheldreda, daughter of the King of that province.

Monasteries indeed were now universally founded, and these sanctuaries were multiplied to an astonishing extent by the devotional fervour of the female Christian converts. Moreover, the rigid sanctity and purity of their lives gave these exemplary matrons such an ascen-

¹ Hume's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 64.

dancy over their husbands that they obtained without difficulty immunities and protection for those religious asylums, which they sacrificed all personal gratification to found and endow. Cloistral schools were invariably appended to these ecclesiastical establishments; within their sacred walls the first spark of learning was kindled in this island, and within their holy precincts the education of the unlettered youth of Britain was first systematically commenced: this pleasing and interesting fact is therefore indisputable, that the princesses and noble women of the Saxon race were chiefly instrumental in advancing the extension of “literature”¹ through the happy medium of the Christian faith.

¹ “The literature of the Anglo-Saxons must be dated from the commencement of their knowledge of Christianity at the close of the sixth century.”—Miller’s *Hist. philosophically illustrated*, vol. i. p. 390.

It was long, however, before any farther progress was made in letters after this first step of the Anglo-Saxons.

The incursions of the Danes, their exterminating conflicts, and the despotic sway and arbitrary enactments of the Norman line, (notwithstanding its princes were distinguished throughout Europe for their patronage of literature,) were ill calculated to foster in England the extension either of learning or science; while the age of chivalry which dawned at the period of the Crusades, contributed to elevate valorous achievements and deeds of prowess far above scholastic lore or mental acquirements.

Here then the “Obligations of Literature” to the “Mothers of England,” are again particularly shewn. The education of youth was at that time uniform; they were left wholly in the hands of their Mothers, to be taught by them the rudiments of learning and religion, until they

had completed their seventh year, at which age they were withdrawn from maternal care to enter on the first stage of their military probation.¹

At this time the grossest superstition prevailed, and the piety of the earlier ecclesiastics had sunk into the ravings of bigotry, while the purity of their lives was frequently exchanged for excesses that brought disgrace on the holy religion which they professed. Happily, however, at that period of life when human nature is most prone to impressions, and when the germs of good and evil are irrevocably sown, the English youth remained under the tutelage of their Mothers, and received from them those virtuous principles which made them as eminent throughout Europe for rectitude and generosity as for courageous and enterprising deeds.¹

During the middle ages, the works of the

¹ St. Palaye.

² See James's Hist. of Chivalry.

early fathers of the church, Romaunts, and other productions of the rude literature of that era, were daily read to the Matrons when working at the tapestry frame; and for their recreation the household bards would often recite those wild and exciting lays in which the traditions of earlier times were preserved, and the events on which they were founded transmitted to posterity; thus perpetuating, by these romantic legends, facts which graver historians had neglected.

But the most material point as regards letters that demands notice at this particular epoch, is the patronage that was bestowed by illustrious women on the few learned men who occasionally brightened the faint dawn of English literature; and which prevented them from seeking in a foreign land that encouragement which they sought and received at home.

Queen Philippa, wife of Edward III., is a striking and illustrious example of the benefit

to be derived from female influence judiciously exerted. Possessed of every accomplishment of the period, she discovered genius by her sagacity, and rewarded it by her bounty.¹ Of her eight sons, many shewed the benefit of her maternal energy in childhood, especially John of Gaunt, who was the protector of Wicliffe, “the father of the Reformation,” and the friend and benefactor of Chaucer, through whose writings we are made acquainted with the nobleness of conduct that characterized the mothers of England at that period, and whose well-merited encomiums on the virtuous Consort of his patron, have been perpetuated in his poem, entitled “The Book of the Duchess.”²

¹ Froissard came over to England to offer to Queen Philippa the first part of his *Chronicles*. She received him and his work most graciously, and settled on him a pension for life, as an encouragement to pursue his historical labours.

² Written on the decease of the Princess Blanch, wife of

The contemporary chroniclers are profuse in their eulogy of the exemplary Philippa, the effect and value of whose influence is commemorated in the noble institution of Queen's College, Oxford, founded under her auspices in 1340, by her chaplain and confessor, Robert Eglesfeld,¹ of which she was the patroness and a liberal benefactor. It received from her the appellation which it still retains; and the honorary patronage of it became vested in her successors, the Queens Consort of England.²

In the endowment indeed of schools and colleges by the illustrious women of that early

John Duke of Lancaster, and mother of King Henry IV., founder of the Lancastrian dynasty.

¹ The founder of this magnificent college appears to have been highly esteemed by his royal master and mistress, and to have shared in their intimacy and confidence. Eglesfeld employed his interest at Court in promoting religion and learning.

² Chalmers' Hist. Oxford, vol. i. p. 89.

period, the British Matrons most effectually accelerated the progress of knowledge, and the advancement of sound and useful learning.

The Universities abundantly prove the truth of this assertion, and nowhere is there stronger testimony of the “Obligations of Literature to the Mothers of England,” than is afforded by the consideration of the munificence, which either founded or enriched many of the most celebrated academical establishments both at Oxford and Cambridge.

As far back as the year 1295, Ela Longespee,¹ Countess of Warwick, shines conspicuous as a chief benefactress to Merton College, which, in point of legal establishment, claims the priority of the seminaries of learning at Oxford.¹

Baliol College was the pious work of the Lady Devorguilla, though founded by her hus-

¹ Chalmers' Hist. Oxford, vol. i. p. 6.

band, the valiant father of Baliol, King of Scots. She completed it after his decease, considerably enlarged his original design, gave it a body of statutes, and most liberally endowed it.¹

Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, distinguished by the appellation of “Mother to the students in both universities, and a patroness to all the learned men in England,” by her early countenance and support of Smyth, Bishop of Lincoln, enabled him to become the founder of Brasenose.² This eminent lady was herself also a great benefactress to learning in various ways, of which her institution of a perpetual preacher at Cambridge, and the *Margaret Professorships* both there and at Oxford, which perpetuate her name, are munificent and striking examples.³

¹ Chalmers' Hist. Oxford, vol. i. p. 44.

² See Appendix C.

³ Fuller's Church History, sec. vi. p. 89.

Lady Paulet, the widow of Sir Thomas Pope, was styled “The Foundress of Trinity,” from her active and honourable fulfilment of her husband’s intentions, as well as from her own individual bounty: and Wadham College owes its completion to the benefactions and liberality of Dorothy, the zealous and enlightened relict of Nicholas Wadham,¹ its founder.

At the sister University, the female name is even still more conspicuous.

A convent of Dominican friars, founded in the year 1280 by Alicia, Countess of Oxford, occupied the site, and was afterwards converted into the present Emanuel College.²

Clare Hall, one of the most ancient academic foundations at Cambridge, was the noble work of “the princely Clare,”³ Elizabeth, wife

¹ Chalmers, vol. ii. pp. 347 and 406.

² Hist. Cambridge, p. 97.

³ Gray’s Installation Ode.

of Sir John de Burgh, and grand-daughter of King Edward the First.¹

Pembroke Hall was founded and richly endowed by the “sad Chatillon,” (relict of Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke,) who on her husband’s decease renounced the world, and devoted herself to works of sanctity and benevolence.²

Queen’s College was commenced by the ill-fated Margaret, “Anjou’s heroine,”³ and completed by the piety and active benevolence of her beautiful rival, Elizabeth Wydville,⁴ consort of Edward the Fourth: hence, designated by Gray, “The paler rose.”

Christ’s College owes its existence and prosperity to the enlarged views of Margaret,

¹ Nichols’ Royal Wills, p. 22.

² Granger’s Biog. Hist. vol. i. p. 67.

³ Gray’s Installation Ode.

⁴ Sandford’s Genealogical Hist. p. 107.

Countess of Richmond,¹ mother of King Henry the Seventh.

St. John's College also claims the "venerable Margaret" as its munificent foundress;² and Sidney Sussex College attests the liberality and zeal of Frances Sidney, (relict of Thomas Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex,) who, in the year 1598, bequeathed funds towards the erection of the College at Cambridge, which has immortalized her name.³

After the invention of printing, instances of the foundation of free grammar schools, exhibitions, donations, and fellowships by noble ladies, might be so abundantly produced, that a volume would scarcely contain an account of those who either wholly or in part thus contributed to the progress of learning.

The first division of the subject need not

¹ Fuller, Ch. Hist. sec. vi. p. 89.

² Nichols' Royal Wills, p. 356.

³ Granger's Biog. Hist. p. 284.

therefore be farther prolonged, than by briefly adverting to the female Sovereigns—the regal Mothers of England,— who have graced and ennobled a later period of our national history.

Queen Elizabeth derived as much fame from the literary splendour, as from the political events of her reign. She assembled around her learned men, whose talents were roused by the hope of attracting her favour,¹ and whom she encouraged by the example which she herself afforded of studious habits and zeal for the advancement of knowledge. She too, like the early Saxon Queens, befriended literature by substituting the peaceful tolerance of pure religion for the merciless persecution of bigotry and oppression : and the memorable words engraved on her monument in Westminster Abbey,—“ Mother of her country,—

¹ See Appendix D.

a nursing-mother to religion and all liberal sciences," are a fitting tribute to her incomparable talents, and justly express the advantages that resulted to the kingdom at large from her superior genius, and powerful mind.

Queen Mary, the consort of William the Third, set a great example to the whole nation. Bishop Burnet, in deplored her early death, and eulogising her many virtues, says,—“It gave us a very particular joy, when we saw that the person whose condition seemed to mark her out as the defender and perfector of our reformation, was such in all respects in her public administration, as well as in her private deportment, that she seemed well fitted for accomplishing that work for which we thought she was born.”¹ The description of her truly Christian death by this eminent prelate, is singularly striking and impressive.

¹ Burnet’s Own Times, vol. iv. p. 195.

Her sister, Queen Anne, equally encouraged genius by the freedom of thought which then prevailed. She emancipated her subjects from the trammels to which letters had so long been subjected by the opposite extremes of popery and puritanism; and learned persons, and works of genius so abounded in her reign, that it procured for it the appellation of the “Augustan age.”¹

Finally, a review of the estimation in which the English court, and the excellencies of British women were held during the long reign of the late venerable Queen Charlotte—so exemplary in her deportment, and so eminent for the practice of every virtue that could add lustre to a diadem—with the contrast afforded by the high tone of English literature at the close of the last century, as compared with the vicious and pestilential

¹ See Appendix E.

productions of writers in neighbouring kingdoms, may well terminate, and nobly exemplifies “the Obligations of Literature to the Mothers of England,” when considered with reference to intellectual advancement in consequence of the introduction of the Christian religion, and the extension of Christian principles.

II.—THE second part of the subject will treat of the obligations of the State to the Mothers of England as regards the wisdom of many of her legislators, whose abilities may in numerous instances be ascribed to the influence which their Mothers’ great talents, vigorous intellect, and strong judgment exercised over their active minds in childhood.

It has been beautifully observed that “the

office and look of maternal love, and tenderness of maternal affection, open Heaven to the child through the medium of the Mother's heart;" and certain it is that the unwearied patience, the attractive gentleness, which call forth the first ideas of the infant, and are mingled with the consciousness of his own helplessness, produce at the earliest dawn of reason, a depth of affection, and a clinging devotion, that remain unbroken through life.

If then the knowledge of the good and evil path, and of those sacred truths which create a regard for the one, and an abhorrence of the other, are among the earliest impressions of the child, and are inseparably united throughout his earthly career with the love of that gentle and unselfish monitress, who first implanted religious feelings in his mind, and then called them into active exertion;—how

effective, how enduring must be the moral lessons inculcated by such a parent? How unbounded the power of that Mother whose vigorous mind, or profound learning roused corresponding energy in her offspring, and whose unsuspected influence was the happy medium of instilling those principles of forbearance, decision, and self-denial—that strict reverence for truth, honour, and justice—the practice in short in domestic life of those virtues and noble sentiments, the extension of which in the more enlarged sphere of action, forms the only and sure basis from which legislative wisdom can spring.

The same inflexible probity, the same submission to principles of duty, and the same steady firmness required in the limited circle of household love is still more necessary and essential to the well-being of the community.

The petty tyrant in the one, will be the despot and oppressor in the other; while the self-governed, and the beloved one of his home, can scarcely fail to be the just ruler of the multitude, and the upright administrator of the laws of his country.

Truth is ever consistent: and purity of motive and generosity of heart give a weight to talent, and induce a confidence in those in authority, that the brightest genius and most learned men would in vain seek to acquire over their fellow subjects, if the domestic virtues that ought to be cultivated in youth were found wanting in manhood.

The maternal power, however, of which we are now speaking, is altogether different from the interference of a mere busy and restless spirit. Though the fruits of a Mother's mental discipline may become evident in the public career of her son, yet her influence must be

exercised only in the sanctity of home. When assumed openly in political matters, affairs of state, or professional avocations, woman's influence founded on woman's silent duty, and springing from woman's warm affection, merges in the mere love of rule, and is lost in her assumption of masculine power based solely on ambition. But to crush the first germ of evil passions in childhood, to moderate the feverish enthusiasm of youth, to combat prejudices and evil propensities, and to lead back the mind in all trials, and under all temptations, to that moral repose, that rectitude, and self-control, still so hallowed by a Mother's early love, that it wanted but the Mother's influence to revive them,—there lies the real power,—there the active principle,—the effect of which has been so eminently proved in the lives of many of the wisest statesmen that grace the annals of our country.

The consideration of this second part of the subject obliges us again to return to the early ages of the Saxon Heptarchy.

After the conversion of Ethelbert, through the instrumentality of his illustrious consort, that monarch turned his attention to the improvement of his unruly subjects; and strove to reclaim them from that gross barbarism and ignorance which distinguished the pagan Saxon tribes. He enacted a code of laws, and as these were the first *written* statutes promulgated in Britain, Ethelbert is entitled to head the list of its wise and judicious legislators;¹ but it is to the enlightened Bertha, that their preservation is owing, for in the sanctuary of Reculver,²—the first Christian establishment in our island (and which is mainly attributable to her zeal and piety),—these laws were copied, cor-

¹ See Appendix F.

² See Appendix G.

rected, and multiplied. The only penmen of those times were monks, and the only seminaries of learning were monasteries. In these holy asylums (to which was invariably appended a “scriptorium,” or writing-room) all the royal charters of the Saxon kings were compiled;¹ and from these emanated all their legislative regulations.

Indeed, in narrating the Obligations of Literature to the Saxon Matrons, first, by the propagation of Christianity, and subsequently by the establishment of religious houses (which were effected almost entirely by the munificence and liberality of the royal proselytes, united to their well-directed influence over their warlike, and in many instances, idolatrous husbands), it must not be forgotten that the earliest annals of our national history were therein collected and

¹ See Appendix H.

perpetuated.¹ Rude as their compositions may appear in the present day, yet without these early traditions all knowledge of what passed from the Christian era to the Norman conquest would have been irrecoverably lost, the Saxon laws would have remained unrecorded, their authors had been unknown and unhonoured, and the customs, usages, and pursuits of our forefathers would have been utterly buried in oblivion.²

If Hume's inference be correct,³ that Abbesses were admitted to sit in the Wittenagemot or “assembly of wise men” (the national council of the Kingdom), because they often signed the King's charters or grants—it proves yet more the high estimation in which the Anglo-Saxon women were held.

The name of Alfred the Great, though not

¹ See Appendix I.

² See Appendix J.

³ Hume, vol. i. p. 199.

the earliest, was undoubtedly the most eminent that dignifies our legislative and regal annals. Beloved by his father far above his other sons, every indulgence that could have enervated a less noble mind was shewn him. When a mere child, his health being delicate he was sent with a princely retinue to travel in the South of Europe, and twice before he had attained his ninth year he had accompanied his royal parent to Rome, then the great resort of all that was learned and wise in the civilized world.¹ But with advantages thus early bestowed, unusual alike to his tender age and the time in which he flourished, and with expenditure profusely lavished upon him, yet so unenlightened was the period in which he lived, that Alfred at twelve years of age could neither read nor write.²

¹ Turner's Anglo-Saxons, i. p. 192.

² Asser, p. 16. See Appendix K.

The development of those rare intellectual powers which surmounted every obstacle that desultory habits may be supposed to have induced, when confirmed by rank, wealth, and the absence of all control, was mainly attributable to his step-mother, Judith, the Queen of Ethelwulf. She was a princess of great learning and rare accomplishments for that early period, and having promised a finely illuminated book of Saxon poems—to which Alfred had been listening with enthusiasm—to such of her sons as should the soonest be able to read them, the innate energy of Alfred's dormant talents was roused, and the foundation was laid of that learning which produced the greatest benefit to his country.¹

His love of minstrelsy is presumed to have arisen from his fondness for the Anglo-Saxon poetry; often, while the aged bard recounted

¹ See Appendix L.

the deeds of heroes, the melodious strains of his harp naturally diverted the attention of the enthusiastic child; but his Mother's constant endeavour was to impress upon the young Prince's mind the merit of those deeds, to the recital of which he so early loved to listen, and which he himself afterwards so gloriously emulated.

Alfred's history is too well known to need recapitulation. As soon as he had learned Saxon he studied Latin, and the difficulties he encountered in his ardent thirst for knowledge induced him, after he ascended the throne, to confer preferment and emolument upon those only who were distinguished for their love of letters. He translated into his native tongue many valuable classical and theological works,¹ formed a body of laws which are the ground-

¹ See Appendix M.

work of the common-law, divided the kingdom into “shires,” “hundreds,” and “tythings,” and by his acts and his writings, the evidence at once both of his wisdom and his vigour of mind, has left to posterity a character never surpassed in our annals for the encouragement of literature, and the advancement of virtue. His system of jurisprudence which was adopted by Edward the Confessor,¹ was considered perfect; to him the country are indebted for the establishment of trial by jury, and as the founder of the University of Oxford, which he instituted for the purpose of compelling his nobles to educate their children, the memory of Alfred the Great must ever be venerated by posterity.²

In reviewing the period from the Norman Conquest to that of the Reformation, usu-

¹ Miller's Hist. Phil. Illus. vol. i. p. 373.

² Turner's Anglo-Saxons, vol. ii. p. 312.

ally denominated, with reference to English history, "the Middle Ages," little can be added to that which has been adduced in the first division of the subject, when speaking of the benefits derived by the youth of that particular time, from maternal influence and instruction; and when alluding to the munificence and enlarged views, evinced by the Mothers of England in the endowment of colleges, halls, and other seminaries of pious education.

At that early age indeed, religion was so closely connected with the advancement of literature, that to separate the two would be almost impossible, and would add little force to the present inquiry.

That period was the age of chivalry, and chivalry was itself partly an ecclesiastical order. Like Christianity it also arose gradually, and, controlled by Christianity, it paved the way for great and mighty results.

Nevertheless at this period, so important in English history, from having given birth amidst its storms and revolutions to our present glorious constitution, and to laws appreciated by all Europe, and in which began that liberty and freedom so dear to our national pride, and that high consideration for women which has induced those refined domestic habits and feelings proverbial throughout the world,—the talents, judgment, and powerful intellect of many of the English Queens, bespeak forcibly the influence that British Matrons in a less elevated sphere, may be supposed to have exercised throughout the land for the benefit of their husbands and sons.

The consort of William the Conqueror was an admirable character, eminent for the practice of every feminine virtue, but more especially as regards the duties of a wife and a mother.

Her youngest son (afterwards King Henry I.) was surnamed “Beauclerc” for his great scholarship, and was considered the most learned prince of the age. In his patronage of genius, and his desire of cultivating a love of letters among his subjects, this wise monarch was most ably seconded by the accomplished British Princess¹ whom he withdrew from a nunnery to place on the throne, attracted by her superior acquirements. She was a worthy descendant of Alfred the Great, and inherited from her Anglo-Saxon progenitors that intellectual taste and ardour for literature, which proved so beneficial to the Kingdom generally, by the impulse it gave to corresponding feelings and pursuits:

¹ Matilda, the orphan daughter of Malcolm, King of Scotland, by the sister of Edgar Etheling; and thus by her mother descended from the Anglo-Saxon line of Alfred and his successors. By this union the royal families of the Normans and Saxons became connected.

and her epithet of the “Good Queen Maud,”¹ by which she is to this day distinguished, be-speaks, far more than mere panegyric, the piety and virtues with which she was so remarkably gifted.

Matilda, wife of King Stephen, is eulogized by all the old chroniclers of her age,² not merely for her strength of understanding, but for the rare power of meeting every variety of fortune with equanimity; and of maintaining her own dignity, and that of her husband by the exercise of rare and singular talents. She was a woman of extraordinary merit, and her capacious mind was well suited to meet and support the difficulties of the perilous time in which she flourished.³ The industrious and

¹ Brayly's *Londiniana*, vol. i. p. 119.

² William of Malmesbury, fol. 107. Hen. Huntingdon, fol. 214.

³ See Appendix N.

the persevering were distinguished by marks of her especial favor; and the foundation by this Princess of St. Katherine's Hospital,¹ which to this day remains under the patronage of the Queens Consort of England fully attests her devotional fervor, her beneficence, and her charity.

Henry the Second, whose reign was remarkable for public order and tranquillity, was almost wholly educated² by his mother, the grand-daughter of William the Conqueror, and the legitimate heiress of the crown.

Unsuccessful in her efforts, and compelled to flee from England, the Empress Matilda³ with-

¹ See Appendix O.

² He was devoted to reading, and bestowed much time in literary discussions. His knowledge of history was great, and he encouraged and rewarded the writers of his time; the most celebrated of which were William of Malmsbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Giraldus Cambrensis.

³ This Princess was married, first to Henry the Fifth,

drew her son to his patrimonial inheritance of Anjou, and there taught him those principles of firmness and justice which eventually led to the most useful results. Her vigorous mind induced her thoroughly to perceive the cause of her own unpopularity, and to comprehend the value of so excellent a character as her brother the “great Earl of Gloucester,”¹ whom she held up as an example to her son. Taking him then as his model, the high qualities which influenced Henry the Second in his just, but mild government, would have formed a period of uninterrupted prosperity, had it

Emperor of Germany, and, secondly, to Geoffrey Plantagenet, Earl of Anjou. By this latter union her son Henry the Second became the founder of the Plantagenet dynasty.

¹ This powerful Baron, so distinguished for his struggles in behalf of his sister, the Empress Matilda, against Stephen, was the natural son of King Henry the First. He was esteemed the wisest, the most learned, and the most virtuous nobleman of his age.—See William of Malmsbury, p. 6.

not been for his struggle with the church of Rome. In all cases of emergency, the King referred to his Mother, and he always profited largely by her prudence and sagacity.¹

Queen Eleanor, his consort, liberally encouraged the taste for poetry, then beginning to be appreciated in England. Bards and minstrels flourished under her patronage. She loved their verses, and patronised their genius. She it was who inspired her sons with that admiration for the poetry of the Troubadours, to which may be traced that spirit of romance ; that heroism and daring intrepidity, which raised the actions of Richard Cœur-de-lion so much above the level of his contemporaries.

Richard was himself a minstrel and a poet ; and the taste for literature with which he had been so early imbued, was soon shewn in the improved education of the English youth,

¹ See Appendix P.

and the increasing number of studious men during his eventful reign. On his accession to the throne, this monarch evinced his gratitude to his Mother, and proved the sense he entertained of her superior abilities by entrusting to her the sole government of his kingdom, during his absence on the Continent.

From the patronage, indeed, of the Anglo-Norman Queens, our first national poetry, distinct from minstrel recitation arose. The great intellectual want, after the Norman conquest, was that of an original vernacular literature which would interest and instruct the general mind of the community. Poetry first produced this in England; the itinerant minstrels were the instruments, and a part of the lettered clergy the first effective agents to introduce and diffuse it. Royal encouragement, and the interest manifested generally by the ladies of the court, induced the younger

ecclesiastics to apply themselves to metrical compositions, which, once esteemed in the higher circles of life, could not fail to be generally attractive.

A taste for historical information also began to prevail in England after the conquest. The Anglo-Norman ladies, rivalling their husbands in literary curiosity, partook of the general feeling, and the high-born not only learned to read, but some few also to write. This fully explains their fitness to be the chosen instructors of the English youth, until these last were called upon by their fathers to enter upon their martial career.

King Edward the First owes an acknowledged debt of gratitude to his Mother, Eleanor, consort of Henry the Third ; and the memory and virtues of his wife Eleanor, of Castile, “a godlie and modeste princesse, full of pitie, and one that showed moche favour to the

English nation ; readie to releve every man's grief that sustained wrong ; and to make them friends that were at discord, so farre as in her laie,"¹ have been perpetuated by that series of magnificent architectural crosses which he erected to her memory.² She accompanied him to the holy land, and was the means of introducing to the English nation on her return, many useful arts, and much valuable information. She strove to soften in her royal consort that stern policy which produced such severe treatment of the Welsh and the Jews ; and her character has justly been painted with peculiar enthusiasm by historians.

¹ Hollinshed's Chron. sub. anno 1291.

² Of these crosses which were erected at all the places where her corpse rested on its journey from Hornby, in Lincolnshire, to Westminster Abbey, those at Northampton and Waltham still exist ; and tradition has perpetuated, by their appellations, the sites of the rest.

Philippa, the estimable partner of Edward the Third, has been already noticed as a mother to thousands, both by her zeal in promoting religious instruction, and by her patronage of learned and upright men: nevertheless, in this division of the subject,—devoted as it exclusively is to such eminent characters as have shed, individually, peculiar lustre on their country, and dignity on their homes,—Philippa, as the parent of Edward the Black Prince, claims a distinguished place. As the victor of Poictiers, his courage and valour have been renowned for ages; as a statesman, his abilities are demonstrated by his government of Guienne, and by the result of many difficult and important missions: but it is as a *Christian hero*, that the Prince of Wales affords so beautiful an example, and contrasts so forcibly with the heathen warriors of antiquity. His generosity in waiting personally

upon the French monarch his captive—his humility in remaining uncovered and standing in his presence,¹—his moderation and self-command in the moment of victory,—his noble conduct to the royal prisoner, when presenting him, amidst the shouts of his admiring countrymen, to his parents, is a striking illustration of the sublime in moral character, induced by the chastening influence of religious feelings, when compared with the chains and insult, the degradation and scorn, with which illustrious prisoners were often treated in ancient times.

If Providence had spared his life, the Prince who could so govern himself, might well have been entrusted with the charge of a kingdom; and the virtues which dignify and immor-

¹ “The French monarch felt the nobleness of the Prince’s generous courtesy, and proclaimed him “un gentil seigneur.” It was, indeed, great and admirable: the highest refinements of the chivalric character was never more brilliantly displayed.”—S. Turner, vol. ii. p. 212.

talize his name, infinitely beyond his heroic deeds, attest forcibly the value of that Mother's instructions by whom alone (in accordance with the custom of the middle ages) religious and moral education had been imparted, until the period arrived of the youthful warrior's entrance upon his knightly career.

The abilities and accomplishments of the heroic consort of Henry the Sixth,¹ have been handed down to posterity in the compositions of Lydgate, a contemporary, one of the earliest of our native poets; and there can be little doubt that her powerful mind would have fostered learning, and befriended genius with munificence and enthusiasm, if discord and civil war had not obliged her to direct her energies to the performance of other and less peaceful duties.

The termination, however, of domestic

¹ See Appendix Q.

feuds, and the introduction which immediately followed, of the art of printing, now contributed to the full development of literature; and its beneficial effects were speedily apparent, not merely in the enlarged education afforded to women, but its consequent happy effects upon their progeny.

To Margaret of Lancaster, Mother of King Henry the Seventh, that monarch was indebted for his early tuition, and for the germs of that wisdom which procured for him the appellation of the “Solomon of England.” The incalculable benefit which subsequent ages have derived from his wise laws, and subjugation of the feudal system, is owing mainly to the early precepts, and judicious instruction, bestowed in solitude and under persecution, by his Mother. She was indeed in its most extended sense the patroness of learning: she was the friend of Caxton, whose works she assisted and

promoted; and by her example to the ladies of her son's court, she prepared the way for that galaxy of female talent and erudition which shone so brightly in the succeeding century. To her was entrusted the infant tuition of her grandson King Henry the Eighth,¹ and from her he imbibed that love of letters which distinguished the opening of his reign, and which induced him to bestow such pains on the education of his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, the future Queens of England.

It was also from her attention to his theological studies, that he derived that passion for controversy which obtained for him the appellation of "Defender of the Faith," and which was the chief instrument for procuring to future generations the blessings of the Reformation, and the ascendancy of Protestantism.

The learned and accomplished governess of

¹ Tytler's Life of Henry the Eighth.

Edward the Sixth, holds a distinguished place among the eminent Matrons of England. She was the second daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, and the wife of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal; and her conspicuous station among the literati of Europe, and the astonishing attainments of her two sons,—the glory and ornament of their age,—contributed to shed fresh lustre upon this admirable lady.¹ Although so young, her pupil had abilities which far surpassed his years, while his learning amazed all who conversed with him.² He was the first British monarch who was bred up in the reformed faith, and his foundation and

¹ “ She was liberally educated by the care of her father; and having added much acquired knowledge to her great natural endowments, she was constituted governess to King Edward the Sixth. She was exquisitely skilled in the Greek, Latin, and Italian tongues, and was eminent for piety, virtue, and learning.”—Ballard’s Memoirs, p. 132.

² See Appendix R.

endowment of Christ's Hospital,¹ with the inestimable advantages entailed by his enlarged views on countless numbers of his youthful countrymen,² render his name immortal in the annals of English literature.

Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, the second son of Lady Bacon, of whom it was said by Addison, "that he had the sound distinct comprehensive knowledge of Aristotle, with all the beautiful light graces and embellishments of Cicero," owed (as did his brother) the early part of his education to his incomparable Mother;³ and it is admitted, that to her zeal, and anxious care,— to the pains which she

¹ For the Foundation Charter of King Edward the Sixth, of the Hospitals of Christ for the education of poor children ; Bridewell for the correction and amendment of the idle and vagabond ; and St. Thomas the Apostle for the relief of the sick and diseased — see the Appendix to the Rev. W. Trollope's elaborate History of Christ's Hospital, No. V.

² See Appendix S.

³ See Appendix T.

bestowed upon him from his tenderest infancy — he was mainly indebted for the great reputation that will ever dignify his name. As a learned statesman, his abilities are well known; as Lord High Chancellor of England, the wisdom of his judgments have never been impugned;¹ and as the founder of experimental philosophy, Lord Bacon stands pre-eminent, and has justly been considered one of the greatest benefactors to mankind.² His veneration for his Mother, and his due sense of her valued tuition was shewn by his desire to be interred in the same grave with her, at St. Michael's, near St. Albans, Herts. A striking instance and a most beautiful example of the advantage that may be derived from maternal influence early and discreetly exerted over the tender mind of infancy.

Mildred, the elder sister of Lady Bacon, and

¹ Encyclo. Brit. p. 727. ² See Preface to *Novum Organum*.

wife of the great Lord Burleigh,¹ High Treasurer of England, and Privy Councillor to Queen Elizabeth, was equally celebrated. It is recorded, that this eminent statesman consulted her upon all difficult and important points, and always acknowledged the advantage he derived from her extraordinary learning and intellectual powers. Her fortitude was severely tried in the loss of so many of her children, though her resignation was beautifully shewn in her pious submission to the Divine Will: and “The Meditation” written by Lord Burleigh after her decease, shews that her virtues were so great, and her learning so profound, as to render the touching words that terminate his treatise—“Written by me in sorrow,”—pecu-

¹ Sir Wm. Cecil, Lord Burleigh, has been deservedly placed at the head of our English statesmen; not only for his great abilities and indefatigable application, but also for his inviolable attachment to the interests of his mistress.—Granger’s Biog. History, vol. i. p. 189.

liarly interesting. Her only surviving son, Sir Robert Cecil, secretary to Queen Elizabeth, eventually attained the highest offices of the state, and was considered the ablest minister of the succeeding reign.¹ He was advanced to the dignity of Earl of Salisbury,² and his prudence, his integrity, and moderation, afford evidence of the excellent precepts which must early and forcibly have been inculcated by his good and gifted Mother.³

Respecting the legislative wisdom of Queen Elizabeth,⁴ and the beneficial effects of her powerful mind, it is only necessary to consider the events of her glorious reign, and to dwell

¹ Hume, chap. xlv. p. 218.

² "This nobleman was greatly esteemed by King James the First, and it was through his sagacity and penetration, when Lord High Treasurer, that the gunpowder plot was discovered."—See Winwood's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 171.

³ See Appendix U.

⁴ "Never prince had a wiser council than she, yet never prince needed it less; for she was herself a counsellor to her council."—Sir Richard Baker, p. 400.

on the gratitude and respect with which her country cherishes her memory. Never was this island more prosperous at home or more formidable abroad, than during her rule.¹ Letters flourished, knowledge became general, and for learned men, the Elizabethan era ranks amongst the most brilliant epoch of our political and scholastic annals ;² whilst her Matrons, equally erudite and studious, were alike unrivalled for purity of morals, and intellectual endowments.³

Were it not from the apprehension of extending this part of the subject beyond the prescribed limits, many more instances might be adduced of statesmen whose talents were elicited and fostered by the judgment and influence of exemplary Mothers. But the

¹ Historical and Political Discourse on the Laws and Government of England, p. 155.

² Camden's Annals of Queen Elizabeth.

³ Russel on Women, vol. ii. p. 120.

dignified position of Great Britain during the reign of Queen Elizabeth of whom it has been recorded by a learned foreigner, that “there have been but few great kings whose reigns can be compared to hers, it being the most beautiful period in English history,”¹ renders it the most fitting time for terminating that portion of this work in which we proposed to consider “the Obligations of the State to the Mothers of England, through the wisdom of many of her legislators.”²

III. The third division of this Essay contains that part of the subject which relates to the great names that maternal care and solicitude have given to science. And here we would

¹ Bayle's Historical and Critical History.

² “Lord Burleigh and the other great ministers of Elizabeth were absolutely of her own choice.”—Granger's Biog. Hist. p. 190.

beg permission to pause, with the view of drawing particular attention to the above simple expression, “maternal care and solicitude,” inasmuch as the last section was devoted peculiarly to the consideration of Mothers whose powerful minds, superior abilities, or profound learning, produced corresponding fruits in their infant progeny, advancing the progress of knowledge by their own zeal, and extending its benefits by the energy which they early inspired in the minds of their eminent and illustrious sons.

But in this portion, a mother’s love is rather to be considered: the all-powerful and touching effects of maternal influence—founded on consistency of conduct, and purity of motive—forming the source from whence has sprung a host of men so great, and so gifted, that they pre-eminently tend to exalt the character of the Mothers of England.

The examples selected to illustrate this point would make it apparent, even without comment, that the piety, rectitude, and simplicity of a Christian, though unlettered parent, whose sole object is to implant seeds of goodness in her child, may produce nobler and more estimable characters than Mothers of the most brilliant talents, or the most profound learning, whose efforts are not based upon moral and religious duties: because, worldly acquirements, though perhaps encouraged by both, would by the one be considered of more importance than sound principles, while the other would justly deem every thing worthless in the comparison with virtue and religion.

It may be said, and with reason, that no learning derived from others, could have increased the innate genius of those great examples of mental superiority about to be

adduced. This is indeed true, and willingly is it admitted that they could scarcely have been greater as regards science or literature; but let not the point contended for be forgotten, that without those early precepts of religious duty and practical morality, derived from Mothers who glory in their christian calling (however deficient in scholastic attainments,) the talents thus rightly guided in the child, might in the future philosopher have been used in disseminating the most baneful principles, tending to the destruction rather than to the benefit of mankind.

The brilliant names which have been given from this source to science and literature attest the truth of that well-known axiom, that most of the christian graces which adorn society spring from the Mother's care. The mass of mankind are little aware how early that most important part of education may be begun,

which tends to regulate the feelings, and to govern the understanding. If then children so speedily receive, and indelibly retain their first impressions, of what vast importance must it be to their future career, that discretion should be united to maternal love; and that parents should strive to discern the bent of infant genius.

Tenderness, forbearance, and a Mother's affection, joined to keen observation of character, will more effectually produce good results, than the overstrained labours of matured intellect, or the anxious pride of a merely learned parent. To quote the language of one of the ablest and most elegant writers of the present age,¹ "There is this remarkable in the strong affections of the Mother, in the formation of the literary character, that without even partaking of, or sympathizing with the pleasures the child

¹ D'Israeli, on the Literary Character.

is fond of, the Mother will often cherish those first decided tastes merely from the delight of promoting the happiness of her son; so that that genius which some would produce in a preconceived system, or implant by stratagem, or enforce by application, with her may be only the watchful labour of love."

The difficulty attending this division of the subject arises, not so much from want of examples to illustrate it, but rather from the difficulty of selecting the most striking out of the number that present themselves.

The brevity of an essay precluding too elaborate a detail, it may perhaps suffice, and best exemplify the Obligations of Literature to the maternal character, if we select one memorable instance from those philosophers, who in their several departments have pre-eminently benefited the world.

The age of chivalry, as we have already seen,

succeeded to that which was immortalized by the introduction of Christianity; and was immediately followed by what may be termed the age of science, which in more enlightened days became purified from the errors and extravagancies of ruder times.

Science dawned but feebly in Europe before the invention of printing, but from that period it rapidly rose. It is from this epoch then that we shall select our present examples.

Sir Isaac Newton, the great, the learned, and the good, who followed in the track of his illustrious predecessor, Sir Francis Bacon, styled by Walpole, "the prophet of arts which Newton was afterwards to reveal," was indebted to maternal solicitude, for the development of that genius, which has never since been surpassed nor ever equalled.

Unlike Bacon, however, the immortal Newton had no illustrious father to pave the way for his

son's celebrity, he had no learned and accomplished Mother to direct his infant mind to principles of science at the time when it was most susceptible of imbibing them. He knew not the blessing even of a father's encouragement, for it was the fate of this great philosopher to be a posthumous child, and so sickly and diminutive was he at his birth, that little hope was entertained of preserving his life.

But Newton, though not blessed with learned parents, possessed a devout and christian Mother, whose sole aim and study was to sow the seeds of piety and virtue in his mind, and whose tender care preserved to us, under God's blessing, one-destined to be the glory of his country and his race.

Sir Isaac Newton was born in 1642, and about the time he attained his fourth year his mother married, secondly, a clergyman; but

she did not suffer this new alliance to interfere with her duties to her son.

When the watchful solicitude of parental love had strengthened his feeble constitution, and her judicious instruction had invigorated the dawning powers of his intellect, she sent him to school to be taught the classics ; but having given him such few scholastic advantages as she considered sufficient for the inheritor of a small patrimony, she again withdrew him to his home to be initiated into the management of a farm, that like his ancestors he might be devoted to a country life. But, for the retirement thus afforded—a retirement so suited to foster the reflective powers of his expanding mind,—Newton perhaps had never been led to those contemplative habits which afterwards produced his immortal theory of universal gravitation ; for though, at the instance of his uncle, he had been previously removed to Cambridge for mathema-

tical instruction, yet the predisposition of the young philosopher for metaphysics was encouraged, if not originally induced, by that previous retirement¹ which was almost forced upon him by the prudence and the affection of his anxious parent.

Great indeed are the Obligations of Literature to the Mother whose untiring watchfulness in infancy preserved the life of so great a man, and whose gentle sway allowed him in childhood perfect freedom of thought and action, save in the one point peculiarly apportioned to a Mother's care—the task of inculcating the truths of our holy religion—a task never more beautifully illustrated by its result; for Sir Isaac

¹ "Being obliged to leave the University on account of the plague, he conceived the idea of the system of gravitation by seeing an apple fall from a tree in his garden. Thus, from the most simple occurrence his penetrating mind was enabled to trace the principle which keeps the planets in motion, and preserves the universe in order."—Watkins's Universal Biog.

Newton was not only a philosopher but a Christian, and spent much of his time in elucidating the sacred Scriptures ; nor could any thing discompose his mind so much as light and irreverent expressions on the subject of religion.¹

Haller, in his forcible language, tells us, "that a little philosophy leads to atheism ; a great deal brings back the mind to religion," and he instances Newton as a bright example of those great men who "in proportion as they explored with success the mysteries of creation, felt their breasts warmed with devotion to its great Author and Governor."²

John Lord Somers, is another and an eminent instance of the fruits of female influence in early years. He was educated by his aunt, who having no children of her own, adopted

¹ Thomson's History of the Royal Society.

² Haller's Letters to his daughter on the Truths of the Christian Religion.

him from his birth, and brought him up in her own house, till he went to the University. He, too, was a weakly boy,¹ and the peculiar sensibility attendant upon feeble constitutions rendered him feelingly alive to the affection of his gentle preceptress, and through that source, particularly susceptible also, it may be assumed, of those seeds of goodness which she strove to implant in his heart.² Somers eventually became Lord High Chancellor of England; and was pronounced by Bishop Burnet “the greatest man he had ever known in that post, and very learned also in divinity, philosophy, and history.”

Cardinal Pole, who pre-eminently deserves

¹ Seward's *Anecdotes*, vol. ii. p. 114.

² “He had a great capacity for business, with an extraordinary temper; for he was fair and gentle, perhaps to a fault considering his post. So that he had all the patience and softness, as well as the justice and equity, becoming a great magistrate.”—Burnet's *Own Times*, vol. iv. p. 156.

to be noticed in this section, from his having assisted in laying the foundation of polite literature by the revival of letters in England, and who was renowned no less in the scholastic, than in the political, and ecclesiastical world, was solely educated in early years by his illustrious mother Margaret, Countess of Salisbury; who was anxious that he should realize the hopes she conceived of him from the precocious abilities he had displayed.¹

By Sir Thomas More he was styled “the ornament and delight of his country,”—“a youth as learned, as he is noble, and as virtuous as learned.”² Erasmus also bears testimony to his great acquirements, which are

¹ “He seconded her views so well, that having drawn on himself the attention of the times in which he lived, and been the object of their love and admiration, his character has stood the test of the two following ages, and is still fresh and unsullied.”—Phillips’ Life of Pole, p. 4.

² More’s Life of More, p. 92.

indeed commemorated by the chief writers of the day, both in his own country and on the Continent; yet in him so beautifully were simplicity of mind and manner, joined to elevation of genius and consummate knowledge, that he was distinguished throughout Europe as the “Modest and learned Cardinal.”

John Wesley, the opposite indeed in religious belief to Cardinal Pole, but equally conspicuous for his Christian virtues, great humility, and vigorous mind, was born in 1703. To his Mother, a woman of energetic character, and singularly active habits, he acknowledged himself indebted for his early tuition;¹ and he loved to express his obligations to her for that strong religious fervour,—that untiring zeal in spiritual pursuits,—and above all, for the rudiments of industry, perseverance, and

¹ Southey’s Life of the Rev. J. Wesley.

self-denial, which have contributed so materially to his celebrity.¹

The name of Wesley naturally leads to that of his follower and advocate, Dr. Adam Clarke, proverbially eminent among modern scholars, and one of the most erudite of biblical antiquaries. His elaborate works need no encomium here; and as regards the piety and devotion of his life, and the well-directed use of his talents, his own words will more effectually illustrate the particular object of this division of the subject than any extract, however copious, that could have been selected from the pen of his biographer. "My mother's reproofs never left me," said he, "till I sought and found the salvation of God. She taught me such reverence for the Bible, that if I had it in my hand even for the purpose of studying a

¹ He was the founder of that celebrated sect by which his name is perpetuated.

chapter in order to say it as a lesson, and had been disposed with my class-fellows to sing, whistle a tune, or be facetious, I dared not do either while the book was open in my hands. In such cases I always shut it, and laid it down beside me. Who will dare to lay this to the charge of superstition?"

David Hume, the historian; and the philosopher Adam Smith; two of the most remarkable men which adorn the page of English literature, were eminent also for shedding lustre by their celebrity on the names of widowed and exemplary mothers.

Adam Smith was a posthumous child, and of so puny a frame that the tenderest and most watchful maternal care was requisite for the preservation of his life. Great as was his reputation,¹ his mother's sweetest reward was the testimony which the philosopher him-

¹ Dugald Stewart's Memoirs of Dr. Adam Smith.

self bore to the benefit of her early instructions.

The widowed mother of Hume was, as we learn from his own pen, "a woman of singular merit, who devoted herself entirely to rearing and educating her children."¹ She bestowed on him religious instruction,² and his literary fame fully justified her anticipations of future celebrity; but his talents were, alas! corrupted in their Christian tendency by the canker-worm of infidelity and philosophical scepticism.

English literature produced few more striking instances of great talent, united to the most inflexible virtue, than that of Dr. Johnson. The genius indeed, which excited such admiration must be considered innate, for it was independent of ordinary instruction; but the rectitude and probity for which he was fully as eminent, was the result of his Mother's reli-

² Hume—"My Own Life," p. 1. ³ Silliman's Travels.

gious precepts, and the effect of her moral influence over him.

His father's eccentricities are well known, and equally so is the poverty that clouded Johnson's prospects at his decease. There is something therefore singularly touching, after reading his eulogium on his Mother, and the simple account he gives of the vivid impression made on his infantine imagination by her first fixing his mind on heaven, as prepared for the good, and of endless torment as allotted to the wicked, to find him when that Mother too had departed, writing "*Rasselas*" to defray the expences of her funeral,—that beautiful work, expressive of the unsatisfactory nature of things temporal, and directing the hopes of man to things eternal.¹

His reverential love for her never abated,— and deeply was he affected at her loss. During

¹ See Appendix V.

her life he contributed to her support, and he hallowed her death by an act of filial piety, which illustrates, far beyond words, the influence a virtuous Mother may obtain over a gifted son, and forcibly exemplifies the blessings which result from pious care, and fixed principles, early exercised on the dawning powers of genius and talent.

Edmund Burke, as a political philosopher, a scholar, a writer, and an orator, has never been surpassed: yet his fame had its basis in a Mother's tender care. Fragile and sickly in childhood, he received the rudiments of education at home: his mental and bodily strength progressed under the watchfulness of maternal anxiety. His Mother, from his nurse became his instructress,—books soon constituted his greatest enjoyment,—by her he was taught to read them, and by her he was encouraged in that devotion to study, which displayed itself in his childish

years, and which influenced so materially his brilliant career.¹

The beautiful effusions of Cowper, and his exquisite poem at the sight of his Mother's picture, above forty years after her death, are well known; and it cannot be necessary to point out the effects of her parental instruction, when that loved Mother's decease, at the poet's early age of six years, contributed to tinge with sadness his after career, and left so indelible an impression as never to have been wholly eradicated,—

“ the record fair

That mem'ry keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effac'd
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.”

It may not, however, be so generally known that the Poet Gray, whose touching strains are engraved on the memory of both youth and

¹ Prior's Life of Burke.

age, was more than commonly indebted to maternal affection. By the promptitude and resolution of his Mother, under circumstances of sudden and dangerous illness, his life was saved in childhood:¹ by earnest and stimulating encouragement she developed his rare talents in boyhood: and by personal self-denial afterwards afforded him, from her own private resources those advantages at Eton, which procured for him the character, at a very brilliant period of literature, of “the most learned man in Europe.”

His gratitude to his devoted parent is forcibly and beautifully expressed in his published letters. He never mentioned her but with a sigh; and, like Sir Francis Bacon, his last request was to be buried by her side in that churchyard,² which his elegy has ever hallowed by its associations.

¹ See Appendix W.

² Stoke Pogis Church, Bucks.

The number of poets, indeed, whose laurels have been gained chiefly through the medium of a Mother's love, or who display in their writings the lasting effect produced in early youth by instructions simple in themselves, but important in their results,—because founded on truth, consistency, and genuine affection, are so great, that were they all adduced, it would convert this section into a mere catalogue of our most distinguished native bards.

The fact, however, illustrates most forcibly the indirect control through life which maternal discipline exercises over the vivid imagination of genius, and exemplifies in the most touching manner the actual power which may be obtained over the human heart (even when unaccompanied by intellectual advantages), when purity of motive and consistency of conduct induce in childhood unbounded confidence, firm trust, and implicit faith.

Pope, in his Universal Prayer, seems to express the nature of those unfading impressions made in early childhood; and he was himself a striking instance of the enduring effect of maternal influence. From his birth, of a constitution feeble and delicate, his sense of obligation to his Mother, and his gentle obedience, and deference to her as such, shone in bright relief through the irritability that shaded his peculiarly eccentric career; and his overwhelming grief at her death, though advanced to the great age of ninety-three, fully justifies that beautiful apostrophe of Dr. Johnson to him, that “Life has among its soothing and quiet comforts few things better to give than such a son.”¹

Thomson, whose “Seasons” occur intuitively to every reflective mind in spring and autumn rambles, was left by his father, at an early age,

¹ Johnson’s Lives of the Poets, vol. iv. p. 90.

the eldest of nine children, to the “sole care of his mother.”

Shenstone’s precocious fondness for reading was so great, that to satisfy his craving for a fresh supply of books, his Mother often wrapped up a piece of wood in the shape of a book, and put it under his pillow to induce sleep for the night, and gain time to supply the little student’s demands for the morrow. What love but a Mother’s would have sought in such an expedient the repose due to over-wrought mental powers?

The influence which the Mother of Robert Burns early acquired and always maintained over her son is well known. His poetic genius was first called into exercise by the ballads and songs which she sung with peculiar pathos and feeling, and in his farther progress his Mother was still his instructress. To the purity of her religious exhortations, and the strict

fulfilment of her social duties,¹ may be traced the most touching of those effusions which shed such lustre on the name of the author of the “Cotter’s Saturday Night.”

Sir William Jones, the accomplished Oriental scholar, owed to his widowed parent that careful education which laid the foundation of his undying fame. Her vigorous understanding had pre-eminently qualified her for the task, and induced her insensibly, and from the first dawn of infant intelligence, to direct the mind of her child to habits of reflection. She early addressed herself to his understanding, and

¹ “She loved a well regulated household, and it was frequently her pleasure to give wings to the weary hours of a chequered life by chaunting old songs and ballads, of which she had a large store. Her religious feeling was deep and constant, and she was blessed with singular equanimity of temper. She lived to a great age, rejoicing in the fame of the poet, and partaking of the fruits of his genius.”—Allan Cunningham’s *Life of Burns*, p. 3.

always directed his inquiring spirit to useful objects. To the observation of his Mother's axiom, "Read and you will know," Sir William Jones always acknowledged himself indebted for his rare attainments; and rare indeed they were, for he was master of twenty-eight languages, an elegant poet, a distinguished naturalist, and an excellent mathematician; but his greatest praise lies in the direction of his talents, which were devoted to public utility and wholly subservient to religion.¹

The name of the benevolent Wilberforce is intimately connected with maternal care and solicitude, whether arising from his peculiarly feeble frame in childhood, or the early age at which he was deprived of a father's protection. From his Mother he inherited many rich mental endowments, and to her firmness and decision in boyhood, his country owe his con-

¹ See Appendix X.

nection with politics, and that useful career in public life which has caused him to be numbered amongst her most eminent philanthropists.¹

The Essays of Charles Lamb abound in the most touching allusions to the sweets and blessings of home ; while his letters attest, in beautiful language, the all-powerful effect of a Mother's love, portrayed in the gratitude which he expresses to the parent whom he has so warmly and affectionately eulogised.²

Endless indeed are the instances in which rare and singular talents have been developed and promoted by maternal love—innumerable the examples that might be adduced to prove, in this particular point alone, how much the “Mothers of England” have done for their offspring, by the exercise of an influence the

¹ Life of Wilberforce by his Sons, p. 7.

² Talford's Life and Letters of Charles Lamb,

purest and strongest perhaps which bind the heart of man to earthly ties.

How forcibly does Sir Henry Wotton,¹ the champion of Protestantism under persecution, portray the solidity of that Mother's well-directed instruction, who, as stated by his biographer, the good old Isaak Walton, undertook to be "tutoress unto him during much of his childhood!"²

How strikingly does the upright, exemplary, and devout Bishop Sandford, illustrate through a blameless life, the effect of a widowed parent's confidence in her children's honour and truth even in childhood, nay in very infancy!³

Who can peruse the "Remains of Henry Kirke White," the touching poet—the young

¹ See Appendix Y.

² "For whose care and pains he paid her each day with such visible signs of future perfection in learning, as turned her employment into a pleasing trouble."—Isaak Walton.

³ See Appendix Z.

humble Christian ripe for eternity,—without feeling his heart overflow with sympathy and admiration at the self-denial, the privation endured in secret by his Mother to aid the poet's “mounting spirit”—to soothe her son's wretchedness at “hope deferred,” and to prevent that genius, which was alike her pride and her joy, from being withered by servile occupations, and the misery of a hateful employment;¹ but, as above stated, instances of a corresponding nature in Mothers are endless,—examples in their sons innumerable!

Sir Walter Scott is among the latest and most distinguished instances of the effect of female education; and with his testimony of the enduring effect of maternal influence, this division of the subject must close. In naming this extraordinary man, we name the brightest ornament of the present age of

¹ See Appendix A A.

literature—one who was deservedly the pride of his country, nay of Europe; who stands unrivalled, not merely for the number of his works, and for the untiring interest which attaches to them, but for never having written a line which did not strengthen virtue, inspire patriotism, and inculcate religion and morality.

By his historical and metrical romances, Sir Walter Scott revived, as it were, the ancient spirit of chivalry, modified by the knowledge and learning peculiar to the age in which he flourished. And it was to his Mother that this great man owed his early tuition; for though, as stated in his autobiography, he was indebted to his aunt for the rudiments of learning, and to his grandmother for that fund of legendary lore, which, fixed irrevocably in his infant mind, clung to him like a charmed gift, even in his declining years,—yet by his Mother

was he imbued with his youthful taste for imaginative composition, and stimulated to exercise his poetical ardour. Of delicate temperament, and feeble constitution, he peculiarly needed the watchfulness of maternal tenderness in childhood; and to the judicious care of his excellent parent in more advanced years, and the benefit he derived from her highly cultivated mind and superior understanding, his literary fame may be attributed.

Sir Walter Scott, whose domestic virtues were not surpassed even by his incomparable talents, thoroughly appreciated the value of his Mother's instructions. He loved to acknowledge her worth, to dilate on her affection, and to award the meed of filial gratitude for her well-directed efforts in boyhood: and his name—a great and noble name—adds another powerful example, and will most fitly terminate the instances selected for illustrating

from the pages of science, the Obligations of Literature to maternal care and solicitude.

IV.—The fourth and last point proposed for consideration is that of the Obligations of Learning *generally*, to the able productions of erudite women, for that high tone of feeling, moral and religious, which characterises the compositions of the Matrons of England; we say Matrons, because, agreeable to the avowed purport of this Essay, none but such are admissible on its pages. But, in justice to many early writers, of whom little remains on record beyond their names as wives, and their erudition as women; and others, of more recent times, who, though not themselves parents, have been the chosen instruments, by means of simple, but gifted productions, of inculcating upon childhood

doctrines and duties which not even the graver studies of maturity have more effectually promoted, we feel it due to them—metaphorically the Mothers of thousands,—not to limit the “Obligations of Literature” to the Mothers of a single household; but in this concluding portion, to consider the subject, as we did in the first division, in a wider and more enlarged form,—one suited to the importance of the theme, and justified by the strength it affords to the truths here sought to be established.

Consideration has been given to the Mothers of England, who first made the name of Christ to be known and hallowed in this land;—attention has been directed to those British Matrons, who, by their domestic virtues, and by their scholastic and religious foundations, preserved from total destruction, in a dark and savage period, those faint embers of literature

which for ages were sacrificed in this island to deeds of arms, and the acquisition of martial accomplishments;—and due honour has been shewn to those noble women, who aided their sons towards filling the highest offices of the state, and whose maternal watchfulness in infancy, and judgment in riper years, preserved for the admiration of posterity, some of the greatest names that enrich our scientific annals.

It now remains only to speak of those who may be termed “Mothers of England,” in the widest and most comprehensive sense of the word —who have nevertheless well earned the appellation, by having devoted their talents to the instruction of the children of Britain, and by having brought the leading doctrines of their faith within the compass of their understandings; enforcing also, under the most pleasing forms, the value and beauty of industry, patience,

and docility—of every virtue, in fact, which all must desire to see practised by youth, and respected in manhood.

Few can attest more truly the value of talents thus devoted, than those who are, in its literal sense, parents, and to whom is entrusted, as a holy charge, beings destined for eternity.

The abundance of works, religious, moral, and scientific, adapted to all ages and all stations, the efforts of those who have condescended to devote high talents to so praiseworthy an object, as sowing the seeds perhaps of future eminence in many a wayward, but gifted child, is a sufficient sanction for adopting towards accomplished British Matrons, that epithet which as “nursing Mothers,”¹ the

¹ Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their Queens thy nursing mothers.”—Isaiah xlix. v. 23.

Scriptures award to Queens, to whom is committed the fate of nations.

Literature, then, is justly bound in gratitude to style “Mothers of England,” those who have dignified the age in which they flourished by the wisdom, beauty, and excellence of works that have long survived their writers, and procured for them an imperishable name; and also those who have entailed transcendent blessings on posterity, as the guides and instructors in religion and virtue, of future philosophers, scholars, statesmen, and divines.

But if it were difficult to compress within these narrow limits, the numerous examples of scientific and learned men whom maternal influence and watchful affection have contributed to elevate to the highest pinnacle of renown,—how far more complicated is the task of selecting from the list of erudite

Matrons, even the most noted of those who adorn their native land.

As, in the former case, we were compelled to limit our illustration to one distinguished scholar only, in some particular branch of science or knowledge, so in the present instance we must have recourse to an arrangement equally brief and imperfect; and possibly we can decide on none more impartial, or more honourable to the Mothers of England as a body, than simply to notice under each reign, those whose compositions (in accordance with the age in which they flourished) were deservedly esteemed, and most conduced towards the improvement or benefit of their contemporaries.

Learning, in women, like the pursuit of science in men, was mainly the result of the invaluable discovery of printing. The study of letters was, to the former, a thing by com-

parison unknown, during the chivalric period which preceded that all-powerful invention; though the respect in which the fair sex was then held, nay, almost worshipped as beings of a superior order—as prodigies of beauty, or miracles of virtue,—gave birth to those innumerable compositions in prose and verse, which, under the title of Sonnet, Lay, metrical Romance, and allegorical Pastoral, comprise the chief efforts of native genius during the middle ages.

But the fostering hand of Margaret of Burgundy,¹ sister of King Edward the Fourth, and

¹ It was while in the service of this Princess in Flanders, that Caxton learned the art of printing, then recently discovered. On her marriage with Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, Caxton was appointed to a situation in the household of the Lady Margaret, but in what capacity, or with what salary, is not known. He seems, however, to have been on familiar terms with the Duchess, and he informs us that he occupied his leisure in several works, which she encouraged

the liberality and protecting influence of Margaret of Lancaster, ancestress of the present Royal family of England, gave to the newly invented art, a degree of importance, and kindled a spirit of emulation in the unlettered female which in the next generation, amounted to a positive passion. Consequently, we find no period in the entire range of British literature, nor even in that of Europe, so rich in learned women, as that of the Tudor dynasty.¹

Chivalry had left behind it a romantic and daring spirit, that not only influenced the writings of the time, but imbued the gentler sex with an energy and loftiness of character

him to complete; and that “the Duchess rewarded him liberally for his labour.”—Life of Caxton, p. 23.

¹ Dr. Wotton, in his *Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning*, says, “There are no accounts in history of so many great and learned women in any one age, as are to be found between the years fifteen and sixteen hundred,” p. 349.

that induced a desire of perusing the classic works of the ancients in the original languages, and of studying, in all their purity, the compositions of the holy fathers of the church; thus rivalling by their scholastic and theological knowledge, the most learned productions of Greece or Rome.

The mother of King Henry the Seventh,¹ the founder of the Tudor line, first encouraged (as has been already observed) this love of letters in the ladies of her son's court.

The virtues of this illustrious princess were worthy the lineal descendant of Eleanor of Castille, and Philippa of Hainault. She flourished towards the close of the fifteenth century, and heads the list of the learned

¹ Margaret Beaufort, mother of King Henry the Seventh, through whose descent from the house of Lancaster, that monarch founded his pretension to the throne, was the great-grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, fourth son of King Edward the Third.

Mothers of England, her literary productions being among the earliest and most valuable specimens extant of English typography.

Katherine of Arragon,¹ and Katherine Parr,² the first and last of her grandson's ill-fated Queens, are admirable instances of the powers of the female mind, when fully developed by education, and regulated by severe and early discipline.

During the reign of King Henry the Eighth, the accomplished daughters of Sir Thomas More astonished all Europe by their profound erudition ;³ especially Margaret Roper, the eldest, who corresponded in Latin with Erasmus ; translated Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History from the Greek ; and with whom her eminent father, the Lord High Chancellor, took counsel in his severe trials, entrusting her "with all his

¹ See Appendix BB.

² See Appendix CC.

See Appendix DD.

secrets," and writing "to her with a coal" during his imprisonment in the Tower, "when cruelly deprived of his pen and ink." She was perfect mistress of the Greek and Latin tongues; and was well acquainted with Philosophy, Astronomy, Physic, Arithmetic, Logic, Rhetoric, and Music. She devoted herself to the education of her children, who ranked among the most erudite of their time: and the benefits conferred on literature by her learned compositions at that early period, may be gathered from the testimony of the greatest scholars, and most able writers of that day.¹

The eminent daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke were equally distinguished for profound learning. Their Latin epistles, their works on philosophy, and their poetical effusions, procured for them the appellation of the "wonder of their age."

¹ Knight's Life of Erasmus, p. 310.

Though the eldest, and the second, of these accomplished sisters have been particularly mentioned in a preceding section, yet in this portion, exclusively devoted to the Obligations of Learning generally to accomplished British Matrons, notice of the gift, by the Lady Burleigh to the University Library in Cambridge, of the Bible in Hebrew, and four other tongues,—accompanied by an epistle in Greek, in her own hand, must not be omitted:¹ and the value to the early reformers of Lady Bacon's translation from the Latin of Bishop Jewel's masterly performance “An Apology for the Church of England,”² needs no other

¹ Lady Burleigh was a great promoter of learning, and a liberal benefactor to several colleges in both Universities, especially in providing them with rare and valuable books. She secretly supported two scholars at St. John's, Cambridge, making provision at her death for a perpetuity of the benefaction.

² See Appendix E E.

testimony than a reference to the letters of Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury,—no higher praise than that contained in his words, “that by her travail she expressed an acceptable duty to the glory of God—deserved well of this church of Christ; and that he should, as occasion might serve, exhort others to take profit by her work, and follow her example.”¹

Lady Jane Grey, the victim of an ambition wholly inconsistent with the beautiful simplicity of her character, needs no panegyric—her rare acquirements no detail.² Sovereign of England for the space of ten days, she expiated on the scaffold, the crime of being elevated by others to a throne, which she ascended with reluctance, and resigned without regret.

¹ Strype’s Life of Archbishop Parker, p. 178.

² See “The Literary Remains of Lady Jane Grey, with a Memoir of her Life, by Sir Harris Nicolas.”

Queen Mary was a learned woman, and an elegant writer. At the solicitation of Queen Katherine Parr, she undertook the translation of Erasmus's Paraphrase on the Gospel of St. John, which, by the best judges of that age, is said to be admirably performed.¹ In her reign flourished the three Seymours, daughters of the Lord Protector Somerset, who were celebrated for the purity of their Latin verses, which were translated and repeated all over Europe.²

Mary Roper, the grand-daughter of Sir Thomas More, and the youngest and favourite child of Margaret, his exemplary daughter before-named, was designated by Roger Ascham "the ornament of Queen Mary's reign." She was one of her attendant gentlewomen,

¹ Queen Mary's writings may be found in "Foxe's Acts and Monuments,"—"Strype's Historical Memorials,"—and in "Hearne's Sylloge Epistolarium."

² Ronsard, Book v. Ode iii.

and translated several of her grandfather's works from Latin into English, as well as many of her mother's that treated on ecclesiastical subjects. Her skill in languages was proverbial; for in addition to Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, she was mistress of Arabic and Chaldee, and also of French and Italian.¹

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the most erudite woman of her age,² the Matrons of England were indeed objects of universal respect and admiration. Their virtues were severe, their talents unexampled; and for classic lore they have never been surpassed by any of their sex. As a natural consequence, their sons were renowned throughout Europe, for their profound knowledge in every branch of literature; and of them it may

¹ She married, first to Mr. Stephen Clarke, and afterwards to Mr. James Basset.

² See Appendix F F.

justly be said, England boasted of philosophers who were rendered pre-eminently great by the precepts and exhortations of their learned Mothers.

Mary Countess of Arundel, was one of the brightest ornaments of this distinguished period. She translated from Greek into Latin the precepts of the sages of Greece,—made a valuable collection of the choicest portions from the books of Plato, Seneca, and Aristotle,—and is well known for her version of the wise sayings of Alexander Severus.¹

To Lady Joanna Lumley, daughter of Lord Arundel, her contemporaries were indebted for a translation from the Greek of many celebrated ancient orations,² and for having

¹ The works of this learned lady (who was the wife of Henry Howard, Earl of Arundel), are still extant, being preserved among the MSS. in the Royal Library at the British Museum.—12 A. III. 12 A. IV.

² The Orations of Isocrates, entitled *Archidamus*,—*Evago-*

rendered into English the *Iphigenia* of Euripides ; and the learning, accomplishments, and virtues of Mary Countess of Pembroke,

“ Sidney’s sister — Pembroke’s mother ”

herself also a poet, have been immortalized by the dedication to her of the “*Arcadia*,” the celebrated romance of her brother, Sir Philip Sidney, the ornament alike of his age and country.

With the termination of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, also terminated the passion (for it can be no otherwise designated) for the acquirement of the dead languages, and the study of the philosophy of the ancients.

Though somewhat changed in its course, learning however still maintained a high place, both in the court and in the country generally; yet the pedantry which distinguished the *ras*,—and the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th to Nicocles, with that to *Peace*, beautifully written in the handwriting of the Lady Lumley, are also preserved in the Royal Library at the British Museum.—15 A. I. and 15 A. IX.

writings of King James,—who was as ambitious of literary as of regal fame,—speedily gave a similar tone to the compositions of his time. The devotional spirit and metaphysical views in which he loved to indulge, gave a new direction to the pursuits of the studious, and gradually superseded that preference which had been long exclusively bestowed on the productions of the sages of antiquity.

In accordance with this newly-awakened feeling, the reign of James the First, includes among those females, who began about that period to make learning subservient to practical results, the benevolent Lady Mary Armyne. Skilled in polemic divinity, and of a religious turn of mind, her labours and talents were devoted, by the aid of missionaries, to the conversion of the idolatrous heathen; and by the distribution of books, and discourses of her own composition, she diligently pro-

moted the spiritual benefit of her native poor.¹

Lady Murray, sub-governess of the infant progeny of the house of Stuart, was also distinguished for great talents, and a high degree of feminine excellence: and the extraordinary virtues of the highly gifted Lady Harrington, to whom was entrusted the sole care of the Princess Elizabeth,² King James's only daughter, was shewn not merely by the singular excellence, and rare accomplishments, of her royal pupil, but made still more apparent by the beauty of character, which attached to her own immediate offspring.³

The reign of Charles the First, notwith-

¹ Gibbon's Memoirs of Pious Women.

² See Appendix G G.

³ For the Life of John Lord Harrington, her only son, one of the most extraordinary and estimable characters that grace our annals of nobility, see Harrington's *Nugæ Antiquæ*.

standing the troubles of that eventful period, could boast of many admirable and accomplished women, whose virtues and devotion called forth by the events of their time, shed a bright glow over the clouds of discord and strife.

Lady Pakington, the supposed authoress of the celebrated “Whole Duty of Man,” and other spiritual works;¹ and Lady Halkett, whose devotional compositions charm by their unaffected piety, exemplify the nature of the pursuits, for which the British Matrons at this date, had exchanged the severer studies of classic lore.

An increasing admiration for the fine arts, of which King Charles was a distinguished connoisseur and liberal patron, was also one of the characteristics of the early part of his reign. Lucy, Duchess of Bedford,² distinguished for

¹ See Appendix HH.

² She was the daughter of the eminent Lady Harrington,

learning, wit, and talents, was conspicuous above all her contemporaries for befriending genius, and for her bounty to distressed artists. Drayton, in allusion to this liberality, states that

“ She rained upon him her sweet showers of gold.”

But the most astonishing person that flourished during the Stuart dynasty, was Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle. She was a poet and a dramatist; and wrote many philosophical discourses, besides letters, and orations of no ordinary merit. She has been described as the most voluminous of female dramatic writers;¹ indeed, the extent of her productions is almost incredible; yet, was she equally eminent for every feminine virtue that could grace and adorn her public and private life, just mentioned,—co-heiress of her young and exemplary brother, and wife of Edward Earl of Bedford.

¹ Jacob's Lives of the Poets, vol. i. 190.

indefatigable in study, pious, charitable, and humane.

With the unfortunate Charles, was extinguished for a while, that ardour for literature, which was at its height during the Elizabethan age; for though the wife¹ and daughters of Cromwell, were very remarkable women,² highly educated, and deeply imbued with a taste for letters, as indeed were many of their female contemporaries, yet the utter ruin of

¹ Oliver Cromwell married the daughter of Sir James Bourchier, a woman of an enlarged mind and elevated spirit. She educated her children with ability, and governed her family with address.—Duncombe's Letters.

² Especially the second, Elizabeth Claypole, whose power and influence over her father was truly surprising. She openly availed herself of it to try and soften his austerity, of which her importunate but unsuccessful advocacy in behalf of Dr. John Hewit, is a well known and admirable instance. In private, she equally presumed on Cromwell's indulgence, by secretly doing good offices to the unhappy royalists, and striving to relieve the oppressed families of the exiled cavaliers.

ancient families in the disastrous civil wars,—the exile of the royalists,—and the fanatic spirit which succeeded, are abundant reasons why so few learned women flourished during the Commonwealth. Of these few, however, Lady Fanshawe and Mrs. Hutchinson¹ deserve to be particularly mentioned ; for their writings were of a very high order.

Lady Fanshawe's Memoir, compiled for the use of her only son, contain many remarkable anecdotes of the great personages of her time, and minutely describe the trials and sufferings of the unfortunate monarch whom she and her husband, Sir Richard Fanshawe, so faithfully and affectionately served. Perhaps there

¹ Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson addressed to her daughter a treatise on the principles of the Christian religion ; and compiled a narrative of the life of her husband, Col. Hutchinson, the Governor of Nottingham Castle, with a summary review of public affairs, during the very eventful period in which he flourished.

is not, in the English language, a narrative more simply or affectingly told, than that portion which relates to their final parting with King Charles at Hampton Court; genuine piety, and firm, devoted loyalty, being mingled throughout with that tenderness and pity, which is woman's peculiar attribute, and constitutes woman's greatest charm.

Lady Fanshawe's advice to her son, to whom she became the sole-surviving parent at the young age of ten months, might well be written in letters of gold, as the rule and guide for the Mothers of England, and the basis of all that can render the youth of Britain great and noble. "Hate idleness, and avoid all passions, my most dear and only son. Be true in your words and actions. Unnecessarily deliver not your opinion; but when you do, let it be just, consistent, and plain. Be charitable in thought, word, and

deed, and ever ready to forgive injuries done to yourself; and be more pleased to do good than to receive good. Be civil and obliging to all, dutiful where God and nature command you, but a friend to one,—and that friendship keep sacred as the greatest tie upon earth; and be sure to ground it upon virtue, for no other is either happy or lasting. Think it a great fault not to improve your time, either for the good of your soul, or in the improvement of your understanding, health, or estate: reserve some hours daily to examine yourself, and think what will be your portion in heaven, as well as what you may desire upon earth. Manage your fortune prudently, and forget not that you must give God an account hereafter, and upon all occasions!"

The restoration of the monarchy in the person of Charles the Second, though it contributed to the revival of learning, and the encouragement

of the fine arts, failed however in restoring letters to that dignified position which they had maintained up to the period of his father's untimely death.

Devotional fervour was succeeded by extreme levity, both of thought and conduct ; frivolous literature usurped the place of graver studies ; and piety and morality had little part in those works of genius for which the reign of Charles the Second was conspicuous.

Yet never were the ladies of Britain more accomplished than at this epoch ; and though many by their writings disgraced those brilliant talents which had been bestowed upon them for a better purpose, still there are not wanting, after the Restoration, amongst the “Mothers of England,” names whose works elevate the character of the sex ; — whose principles and irreproachable conduct gave an effectual check to the prevalent vice and folly

of the age;—and who have thus high claim to a place in the list of British women who have rendered important services to Literature.

Among them the Countess of Abingdon, Dryden's “Eleonora” and her sister, the Marchioness of Wharton, are eminent examples. Lady Wharton was a poet and a dramatic writer; and her lyrical taste was held in high estimation by contemporary writers. The poet Waller's two cantos of Divine Poesy, were occasioned upon sight of her Paraphrase on the Fifty-second Chapter of Isaiah.

Katherine Phillips, the “matchless Orinda,” began to exercise her poetical talents very early in life, and by her translation of Corneille's plays, and other of the best productions of the French poets into English, she made the youth of this country acquainted with the rare merits of these admirable compositions.¹

Susannah, the exemplary wife of Richard

¹ See Appendix I I.

Hopton, one of the Welsh judges,—of whom it was said by an eminent divine, “among the many and most serious good wishes I have for the Church of England, this is, and always shall be one, that all her sons and daughters were such”¹—was distinguished for many valuable works on serious subjects:² and the writings of the Duchess of York,³ the mother of the Princesses Mary and Anne, (afterwards Queens of England,) redeem in some measure

¹ Dr. Geo. Hickes, Dean of Worcester, author of Controversial Letters, &c.

² Chiefly for one, entitled “Daily Devotions,” published anonymously: afterwards reprinted and generally received as the performance of a late Rev. Divine of the Church of England. The error was refuted by the friend and executor of Mrs. Hopton (Dr. Hickes), in his second vol. of “Controversial Letters.” See Ballard, 272.

³ Anne Hyde, the accomplished daughter of Edward Earl of Clarendon, Lord High Chancellor during the reign of King Charles the Second. She died before the Duke of York ascended the throne:—four out of eight children survived her.—Burnet’s Own Times, vol. i. p. 247.

that laxity of morals and disregard of religion, which degraded the character of the court of Charles the Second.

James the Second, his brother, reigned too short a time to enable any precise character to be applied to the female productions of his reign. Nevertheless, the devout works of Mrs. Elizabeth Bury, the friend of Dr. Watts ; the grave and pious writings of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe,¹ “ the Philomela ” of Prior ; the poems of Anne, Countess of Winchelsea,² so eulogised by Pope ; and the inimitable letters of Lady Rachel Russell,³ the incom-

¹ Her work, entitled “ Friendship in Death,” or letters from the Dead to the living, written on the occasion of her husband’s decease, have been translated into several foreign languages, and with her “ Letters Moral and Entertaining,” have been very widely circulated.

² Maid of honour to the Queen of James the Second, and afterwards married to Heneage, Earl of Winchelsea.

³ See Appendix K K.

parable and devoted wife, the exemplary parent—the pattern of all that is excellent in the female character, bespeak a feeling of purity, dignity, and upright principle, altogether opposed to the style of literature in the previous reign.

The ascendancy of protestantism, on the accession of William and Mary,¹ contributed once more to the study of works on divinity and theological controversy. Of these few, none were more popular than the writings of Mrs. Elizabeth Burnett,² wife of Gilbert, Lord Bishop of Salisbury; nor any more celebrated than those of Lady Masham,³ the friend of Locke, and the correspondent of “ Mary

¹ See Appendix L L.

² See Appendix M M.

³ Damaris Lady Masham, daughter of that erudite Divine, Ralph Cudworth, D.D., Hebrew Professor in the University of Cambridge. As a testimony of her gratitude to Mr. Locke's memory, she drew up the memoir of that remarkable man, which is printed in the Great Historical Dictionary.

Astell." The Essays of Lady Chudleigh; the works of Lady Norton; and the poems of her daughter, the young and beautiful Lady Grace Gethin, whose rare talents and Christian virtues have been celebrated by the poetical genius of Congreve,¹ form some of the most esteemed compositions of that period.

The reign of Queen Anne was one that reflects great honour on the literary females² who flourished at that epoch; not only from the learning, but for the varied attainments for which so many of them were remarkable.

Their writings seem to embody the chief excellence of the preceding reign, shorn of their exclusiveness or extravagance; graceful, elegant, and refined; pious, without fanaticism, and learned without pedantry. The fine arts also met with due encouragement. This is

¹ Congreve's *Miscell. Poems*, vol. v. p. 158.

² See Appendix N N.

evident from various musical compositions, and many fine paintings, the production of female artists ; and the Phylactery executed by Mrs. Elizabeth Bland, the skilful calligraphist and eminent Hebrew Scholar, is still considered worthy of preservation by the Royal Society.¹

The merits of Mrs. Catherine Bovey, the munificent projector of a College at Bermuda, whose time and talents were devoted to instructing poor and friendless children, and whose riches were expended in the endowment of churches abroad, and the institution of free-schools in her own country, deserves particular notice amongst the benefactors of literature at this epoch : while the poems of Mrs. Monk, and the essays and dramatic compositions of Mrs. Catherine Cockburn, are a few, out of innumerable instances, of refined taste, and high mental cultivation.

¹ See Appendix O O.

On the demise of Queen Anne, a great change took place in the public taste. Though many women of powerful abilities, and extensive learning, lived in the reign of King George the First, yet the times were unfavourable to literature, as the minds of the people were almost entirely occupied by politics and pecuniary speculations.

The able letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, however, shew that wit and vivacity did not altogether expire with the house of Stuart; and superior talents were also displayed by Mrs. Francis Sheridan in her tales and comedies: while the extraordinary learning of Constantia Grierson,¹ exhibited not only in her poems, but also in her Latin translations, prove the intellectual spirit which prevailed even under circumstances of depression and discouragement. Need we also add that

¹ See Appendix P P.

the object contemplated by this wonderful woman, the education of her son, is a strong instance of that union of literary zeal with maternal solicitude, which so elevates the character of accomplished British Matrons ; especially when, as in the present instance, limited pecuniary means were an additional stimulus to the employment of her talents.¹ True, indeed, it is—and beautiful is this characteristic of “the Mothers of England,”—that fame, the noblest reward of literature, has with them ever been subservient to maternal pride, maternal forgetfulness of self, and above all to maternal affection and duty.

The historical writings of Mrs. Catherine Macauley most fitly exemplify the distinct

¹ Her son, scarcely less eminent as a scholar, than his learned mother, expired in Germany at precisely the same age as the parent to whose devotion he was so largely indebted.

Cibber's Lives.

style of literature which marked the times of George the Second, when vigorous, theoretical, and new opinions began to be broached, and were openly and warmly discussed. Strongly imbued with the love of liberty, and with an ardent feeling of independence, the compositions of Mrs. Macauley bespeak those sentiments of political freedom, and that deep political bias, which were destined to convulse all Europe in the succeeding generation.

There were not however wanting works of a more feminine character. Mrs. Chapone's letters are perused with pleasure and profit, from the valuable precepts which they so forcibly inculcate; and the novels of Mrs. Sarah Fielding, with many lighter productions of a high order, captivated the scholar, while they interested the ordinary reader. But the greatest benefactor to literature in this reign, and

she whose after influence contributed so materially to advance its interests, was Caroline of Brandenburgh Anspach, the admirable Queen of King George the Second.

Accounted one of the most learned princesses of Europe, she was so estimable in conduct and judicious in purpose, that she was nominated Regent by her royal consort, and entrusted with the affairs of the kingdom, during his Majesty's absence in his German dominions. Her chief claim however to notice in the present Essay, arises from her patronage of learning, and from her encouragement of the fine arts, her zeal for science, and liberality to artists and men of genius.

Queen Caroline set a beautiful example to the MOTHERS OF ENGLAND, by personally superintending the education of her children,—directing their pursuits, cultivating their understandings, and implanting with a taste

for letters the firmest principles of religion and morality.

These sentiments shone forth in the ensuing reign, which will ever be memorable for the virtues of its domestic circle; but that theme, as also the admirable results hence arising, cannot here be discussed.

The blaze of literature which reflected such lustre on the reign of George the Third, and that of his sons and successors, is marked by such strong and distinct features, that any examination, however brief, would extend far beyond the limits of this Essay. Suffice it then in conclusion to observe, that if the sixteenth century was the Augustan age of female erudition and classic lore, the nineteenth may be considered as the age of scientific attainments, and the perfection of learning in all its varied and sterling branches.

Female authors abound, and their composi-

tions are replete with profitable instruction. Works on Religion and Morality,—on History and Biography,—on Philosophy and Science; Essays, Travels, and the fine Arts,—with Tales of Mirth and Recreation, during the last century have proceeded from the pen of so many eminent women, that to select a few names only, would have been invidious, by seeming to lessen the merits of those that remained unnoticed.

It is hoped however that enough has been said to prove the “Obligations of Literature to the Mothers of England,” from the first introduction of Christianity to the institution of chivalry; and from the era of printing, to that bright dawning of science, of which that wonderful invention was the harbinger.

Yet these considerations, although they embrace the chief points proposed in this Essay, form a very brief portion of the innu-

merable claims which the women of Great Britain, whether as wives or mothers, have on learning generally.

Infant genius, in all its helplessness, excites feelings of maternal love and pride, which induces peculiar tenderness, when the feeble moan of suffering calls forth, in all its energy, that sympathy and compassion that none but Mothers know; but when infancy, and childhood, and boyhood are past, there yet remains much, very much, which is woman's peculiar province.

A Mother's anxious watchfulness descries, before all others, the evil effects of the over-wrought mind of the student; and the gentle thoughtfulness of maternal affection, succours and revives the bodily frame which without such counteracting tenderness, would perhaps have consigned to an early grave,—a victim to literary zeal—that genius which

was destined to ornament the age in which it flourished.

Good and wholesome principles—religious and moral feelings, inculcated by a fond parent, have often checked in the young philosopher the germ of infidelity, and effectually preserved him from the baneful and destructive doctrines of the sceptic: thus giving to the world, through the mild and effective, though unsuspected influence of a beloved Mother, a Christian, and a patriot, no less than an eminent and accomplished scholar.

Whose imagination indeed can place bounds to the patient tenderness of woman's love! or adequately describe the part she is called upon to sustain through life, in all its stages, and in all its varied scenes!

The senator and the statesman, worn and exhausted by political difficulties, and by

anxieties that must not be disclosed, because on them perchance may hang the fate of empires, is revived, solaced, and invigorated, not only by the cheerfulness that soothes, and the affection which lightens, but also by that discretion which seeks not to penetrate schemes and designs that may not in honour be divulged. The man of science, and the mathematician, wrapt in theory, and absorbed in calculations which seem to stretch beyond the bounds of human capacity,—lost and bewildered even in the mazes of their own abstruse problems, are restored to healthful feelings, by the sanctity of domestic peace, and are not unfrequently aided by the skilful pen, or the accurate pencil of *HER*, whose conjugal affection has made their homes sweet—their hearths cheerful¹. Hours of needful

¹ It is generally reported, that the illustrations in one of the most elaborate of the Bridgewater Treatises, were the

repose have often been forced upon the philosopher, whilst the anxious partner of his toils, has been preparing mechanically from rough calculations, the clearer definitions by which the literary world were to benefit from the labours of a powerful mind.

The learned Professor of Astronomy in the University of Glasgow, when speaking of the benefits entailed on posterity by the invaluable discoveries of Sir William Herschel, says, “The Astronomer, during these engrossing nights, was constantly assisted in his labours by a devoted sister, who braved with him the inclemency of the weather,—who heroically shared his privations that she might participate in his delight,—whose pen, we are told, committed to paper his notes of observation as they issued from his lips. She it was, says the best of exclusive performance of the lady of its distinguished and learned author.

authorities, who, having passed the night near the telescope, took the rough manuscripts to her cottage at the dawn of day, and produced a fair copy of the night's work on the ensuing morning;—she it was who planned the labour of each succeeding night,—who reduced every observation, made every calculation, and kept every thing in systematic order;—she it was—Miss Caroline Herschel¹—who helped our astronomer to gather an imperishable name.”

¹ “This venerable lady has in one respect been more fortunate than her brother,—she has lived to reap the full harvest of their joint glory. Some years ago the gold medal of our Astronomical Society was transmitted to her, and the first of our learned societies has recently inscribed her name upon its roll; but she has been rewarded by yet more,—by what she will value beyond all earthly pleasures,—she has lived to see her favourite nephew,—him, who grew up under her eye an astronomer,—gather around him the highest hopes of Scientific Europe, and prove himself more than equal to tread in the footsteps of his father.”

View of the Architecture of the Heaven, by J. P. Nichol, Professor of Astronomy in the University of Glasgow, pp. 113, 114.

Milton was not the only parent¹ whose daughters preserved, for the admiration of future ages, the immortal productions of a blind and afflicted father—neither were the accomplished Margaret Roper, or the admirable Lady Rachel Russell, solitary examples of counsel sought in captivity, and both advice, co-operation, and aid received in matters of the highest import, from female ability.

Many works of genius and profound erudition,—rare manuscripts, and invaluable journals, have found a permanent place in English

¹ A venerable and learned prelate, who has not been so long deceased, but that his memory must yet live in the remembrance of many in his diocese, who was the friend of Edmund Burke, and well known as an elegant scholar, and accomplished naturalist,—was for many years quite blind; nevertheless, he performed his clerical duties with accuracy, and during the summer pursued his botanical studies, by the aid of his daughter to record the observations induced by the keenness of his touch.

Literature, in consequence of female relatives having compiled and given to an admiring world the productions of their deceased sons or husbands, whose lives were too short for the completion of their comprehensive designs: or, who had fallen an early sacrifice to their energy and zeal in pursuing them.

Truly then may the Christian Mothers of England challenge competition with those of Greece and Rome,—truly may that noble and endearing title be claimed for them without apprehension of rivalry from the Matrons of any clime, or of any age. Equally enthusiastic in their love for their country, they yet sink not, as in the olden time, the woman's tenderness, in the sterner and more manly virtues; but fixing their thoughts on Eternity, and ever alive to the conviction that to them and their offspring their brief sojourn on earth is but the probation of a more glorious

state of existence, they strive from infancy to make all sentiments of mere worldly fame subservient to those divine precepts, which can alone render the actions of their children acceptable in the sight of their God. They glory in the belief that the greatest triumph of a Mother's love, is the power of restraining the waywardness of youth, and that the never-fading influence,—the remembrance of her early lesson,—her tearful eye in displeasure,—her sweet smile in approbation,—and the warm kiss of affectionate pride, so cherished by the child as the Mother's highest reward,—will in all probability prove the best safeguard through life, and tend to fix the wavering spirit in the path of rectitude, and to rescue the wanderer from sin and destruction,—from years of bitterness on earth,—from endless misery hereafter.

As regards Literature, there can be no hesi-

tation in admitting that the works of the ancients excite unqualified wonder and admiration. Their beauty, their grace, their eloquence, are best shewn by that undying fame which for ages has perpetuated compositions never excelled, perhaps never equalled; yet even in this point,—the one which it is particularly necessary here to consider,—the benefits conferred on learning generally by accomplished British Matrons is evident. The pens of our erudite countrymen have interpreted the doctrines of their wisest sages for the instruction of the less accomplished of their sex; and the classical beauties of heathen literature have been collected, translated, and rendered more valuable to the youthful scholar, by those Christian graces, which shed an enduring lustre on writers already rendered so eminent by talents and acquirements of the highest order.

Could recent works of science and philosophy be with propriety enumerated,—could the subject indeed have been sufficiently extended, to notice the distinguished names of those female authors whose invaluable compositions prove a blessing and benefit to the present enlightened generation,—doing good in their own day, and erecting a temple, within which their memory and their works will be held in everlasting remembrance,—still greater force would be added to the truth, which it has been the object of the present Essay to illustrate,

THE OBLIGATIONS OF LITERATURE TO THE
MOTHERS OF ENGLAND.

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

A P P E N D I X.

NOTE A.

PUDENS AND CLAUDIA OF ST. PAUL.

(See p. 10.)

THE train of circumstances which fixes the identity of the names “Rufus, Pudens, and Claudia,” mentioned by St. Paul, with the individuals whose birth and marriage have been distinctly, though briefly alluded to by the Latin poet, are most striking.

Claudius was chosen Emperor, A. D. 43, and reigned till the year 56.

In the second year of his reign, he began his contest with the Britons. Caractacus, their leader, after opposing the Roman legions for nine years, was taken captive in the year 55, and carried to Rome, together with his wife and daughter.

Struck with the intrepid fortitude of the British warrior, Claudius (as Tacitus the historian so eloquently described,) ordered his chains to be

struck off; and both himself and the Empress Agrippina we are told, took pity on his wife and child; the latter of whom, as was the custom of that period, was, there is reason to believe, forthwith adopted by them, and named Claudia.

Caractacus, it appears, was still a hostage in Rome when Claudius died; and Nero, who succeeded Claudius, was also the adopted of that Emperor, so that both he and Claudia formed at the same time, part of the imperial household.

Now it is a remarkable fact, that the detention of the British hostages in the imperial city, was coincident with St. Paul's residence there, "a prisoner;" and the same year that the holy apostle was released after his first examination by Nero, was that in which the British captives, with their king, Caractacus, were also set at liberty by that Emperor, A. D. 58.

After his first release, St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, says, in speaking of distinguished converts, "Salute Rufus;"—but six years afterwards, during his second examination, he unites the name of Claudia with the favoured disciple whom he had previously denominated "chosen in the Lord." The cause of this association is made apparent from the verses of the poet quoted in the text. Martial dwelt at Rome for thirty-five years, and was well acquainted with both parties: he distinctly verifies the fact, that Claudia, a

British lady, was married to Rufus, and that this celebrated Roman citizen was afterwards called Pudens, on account of his virtues, modesty, and gentleness.

St. Paul and the poet being contemporaries at Rome, there can remain no doubt that the persons named by each were the same individuals; for nothing can be more improbable than that there were two Claudia's born in Britain, or two Rufus's surnamed Pudens, at one and the same time; yet the Apostle of the Gentiles characterises his convert by both appellations, in his Epistles to the Romans, and to Timothy; between the dates of which, viz. the years 58 and 66, it would appear by Martial, that Claudia, "British born," was married to Rufus, afterwards Pudens, and hence named Claudia-Rufina.

NOTE B.

EARLY CHURCHES OF BRITAIN.

(See p. 14.)

The reception and establishment in this island of a deputed ecclesiastic from the see of Rome, gradually induced a feeling of jealousy between

the descendants of the primitive Christians whose faith was derived from the Apostolic age, and the recent proselytes, whose conversion had been effected through the instrumentality of Pope Gregory and his missionaries.—“A struggle accordingly began between the Papal Christianity of Augustine and the more ancient Christianity of the British churches ; and though the latter were supported by the kindred churches of the northern part of the island, they were forced to give way to the ascendancy of Rome, which was gradually extended throughout the Saxon governments.”—See Miller’s History, Philosophically Illustrated, vol. i. p. 365.

NOTE C.

BISHOP SMYTH, FOUNDER OF BRASENOSE COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

(See p. 23.)

“ His biographer has supposed him to have been educated in the household of Thomas, the first Earl of Derby. The Countess of Richmond, who was the second wife of this nobleman, according to a laudable custom in the houses of

the nobility, provided in this manner for the instruction of young men of promising talents; and it is known that she was the early patron of Smyth."—Chalmers' History, Oxford, vol. i. p. 227.

NOTE D.

BISHOP GODWIN THE HISTORIAN AND ANTIQUARY.

(See p. 27.)

Francis Godwin was promoted by Queen Elizabeth to the bishopric of Llandaff, in consequence of his able and useful works; and "by the countenance and protection which she extended to erudite persons, the two Universities are stated to have produced more illustrious examples of learning and worth than can be instanced in any age in the same compass of time."—Ballard's Memoirs, p. 158. — Granger's Biog. Hist. vol. i. p. 350.

NOTE E.

STATE OF LITERATURE AT THE CLOSE OF THE STUART
DYNASTY.

(See page 29.)

“ The reign of Queen Anne may be said to have been the summer of which William and Mary’s was only the spring. Every thing was ripened ; nothing was corrupted. It was a short but glorious period of heroism and national capacity ; of taste and science ; learning and genius ; of gallantry without licentiousness, and politeness without effeminacy.”—Russell on Women, vol. ii. p. 150.

NOTE F.

FIRST WRITTEN LAWS OF ENGLAND.

(See p. 35.)

The laws of the Anglo-Saxons were first reduced to writing by Ethelbert, King of Kent, who ascended the throne so early as in the year 568.*

* The laws passed by Ethelbert with the advice of the Wittenagemot still exist in the Saxon tongue, being printed in Bishop Wilkins’s *Leges Anglo-Saxonicae*.

Afterwards Ina, King of Wessex, and Offa, King of Mercia, enacted laws for the regulation of their respective kingdoms. King Alfred composed from the laws of these three princes, the code which he published for the government of his subjects, and which became the foundation of the common law of England.—Miller, vol. i. p. 373.

NOTE G.

RECULVER.

(See p. 33.)

To accommodate Augustine and his followers, Ethelbert resigned to them his royal palace at Canterbury, and retired to Reculver, a deserted Roman settlement, distant about nine miles; where, having built a palace within the area of its ancient walls, he there resided until his death, in the year 616.

Reculver had been an important military station of the first Roman settlers, and its castle and walls were among the earliest works of that people in this island. By them it was termed Regulbium; and by the Saxons Raculfeester, on account of its castle,—and, eventually, Raculf-minster, in

consequence of the monastery that stood there : for soon after the arrival of Augustine, a monastic foundation was established at Reculver, which in a few years attained to great eminence, and was one of those religious seminaries where the Benedictine monks struck in the dark the first sparks of learning in this island.

NOTE H.

SAXON LANGUAGE.

(See p. 36.)

To the neglect of the Saxon tongue has been attributed the principal errors of modern historians writing on those times. After the Norman conquest, it was taught in no other seminaries but in some of the earlier monasteries of the Benedictine order ; in which (as it was the language of their charter, from their founder being Saxon), public lectures were read in that tongue until the dissolution ; and a tutor was employed to teach the Saxon character to the younger brethren, that the knowledge of a language so necessary to elucidate the primitive history of these kingdoms might be perpetuated.

NOTE I.

EARLY ENGLISH WRITERS.

(See p. 37.)

In the seventh century, a desire of learning began to be generally diffused among the Anglo-Saxons. Their most eminent scholars were Gildas, Bede, Asser, and Alcuin ; their most popular poets, the bards Cœdmon and Aldhelm.

NOTE J.

BEDE, THE HISTORIAN.

(See p. 37.)

Of this fact, a brighter example cannot be adduced than that of the venerable Bede. Both ancient and modern authors have bestowed the highest encomiums upon the learning of this extraordinary man.

His works are many, but the most valuable is his Ecclesiastical History of the Anglo-Saxons, consisting of five books, from whence the more perfect part of our early national history is derived. He was born in 672, and died at the age of 63.

NOTE K.

ASSER, BISHOP OF SHERBORNE, KING ALFRED'S
BIOGRAPHER.

(See p. 38.)

The merits of Alfred are supported by a degree of evidence which seldom attends the character of ancient days. He had the advantage of possessing a literary friend in Asser, Bishop of Sherborne, who wrote some biographical sketches of his great master's life and manners. He was contemporary with Alfred, and the most authentic historian of that king.—See S. Turner's Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. p. 193.

NOTE L.

INFLUENCE OF QUEEN JUDITH OVER HER SON.

(See p. 39.)

“ Alfred returning to Queen Judith, eagerly enquired if she actually intended to give the book to the person who would soonest learn to read it. His mother, repeating the promise with a smile of joy at the question, the young prince

took the book, found out an instructor, and learned to read. When his modesty had crowned his wishes with success, he recited its contents to her."—*Asser*, p. 17.

NOTE M.

LITERARY PRODUCTIONS OF ALFRED THE GREAT.

(See p. 40.)

Of the books which this king translated, the principal are, the 'General History of Orosius,' — the 'Anglo-Saxon History of Bede,' — the 'Treatises of Bœtius de Consolatione Philosophiæ,' and the 'Pastoralis Cura of Gregory.' He is also said to have translated into his native tongue many portions of the Bible; and, William of Malmesbury asserts, a great part likewise of the Roman compositions. His fondness for poetry continued with him through life.—Sharon Turner, vol. ii. p. 286.

NOTE N.

MATILDA, CONSORT OF KING STEPHEN.

(See p. 45.)

A contemporary historian, who was connected by blood both with the English and Normans, thus quaintly eulogises this princess:—"A woman made for the proportion of both fortunes ; in adversity not dejected—in prosperity not elated : while her husband was at liberty, a woman ;—during his durance, as it were a man ; acting his part for him when he was restrained from acting it himself—not looking that fortune should fall into her lap, but industrious to procure it."—William of Malmsbury, fol. 107.

NOTE O.

ST. KATHERINE'S HOSPITAL.

(See p. 46.)

St. Katherine's Hospital, as originally founded, was built on the banks of the Thames, adjoining the Tower, but it having been found expedient to

take down the ancient church to form the new St. Katherine's Docks, the establishment was removed to the Regent's Park, where the newly-erected buildings, and the very elegant abode appropriated to the master, forms a most striking object.

By a reservation in the reign of Eleanor, wife of King Edward the First, who was a great benefactress to this charity; the patronage was vested in the Queens Consort of England, and her most gracious majesty, Queen Adelaide, is the thirtieth royal patroness who in succession have enjoyed the privileges thus early secured to them.—Pennant's London, p. 84.

NOTE P.

FIRMNESS OF THE EMPRESS MATILDA, MOTHER OF KING HENRY THE FIRST.

(See p. 48.)

Matilda's foresight induced her at the commencement of her son's reign to dissuade him from exalting Beckett to the prelacy; and thirteen months elapsed before the archbishop could secure his appointment to the vacant see. In after years, when the struggle

for power between the monarch and the haughty prelate were at its height, attempts were made to subdue King Henry, through the influence of his aged mother, by disquieting her conscience with threats of eternal as well as temporal danger to herself and her son. But the spirit of her ancestors yet animated Matilda. She desired to hear the censured laws read,—the emissaries of Beckett, after various excuses, were compelled to produce them, and the undaunted princess, after attentively listening to their recital, not only warmly defended her son, but dismissed his opponents with unqualified approbation of many of the disputed laws, and admiration of the firmness evinced by the king in requiring the royal dignities to be preserved.—Sharon Turner, vol. i. pp. 204—224.

NOTE Q.

QUEEN MARGARET, CONSORT OF HENRY VI.

(See p. 54.)

“ Such was that still more celebrated Margaret of Anjou,—active and intrepid, general and soldier, whose genius supported a long time a feeble husband; which taught him to conquer; which replaced him

upon the throne ; which twice relieved him from prison ; and oppressed by fortune and by rebels, which did not bend till after she had decided in person twelve battles.”—Russell on Women, vol. i. p. 129.

NOTE R.

LEARNING AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF KING EDWARD
THE SIXTH.

(See p. 57.)

“He had acquired,” says the celebrated physician, Jerome Cardan, “many languages when he was but a child : he was perfect in English, his native tongue, and in Latin and French ; and I have been informed that he was acquainted with the Greek, Spanish, Italian, and other languages. He spake Latin as well as I did ; nor was he ignorant of logic, of the principles of natural philosophy, and of music.” Before he was eight years old he wrote Latin letters to his father. He succeeded to the throne in the tenth year of his age, and he expired at Greenwich before he was sixteen.

The abilities and accomplishments of Edward’s mind were indeed wonderful ; but his virtues and his true piety were yet more extraordinary. From early

childhood, he showed great love and respect for religion, and every thing relating to it; and long after his death grave men, both in their letters and their printed books, commonly called him “our Josiah,” or “King Edward the Saint.”—Fuller’s Worthies.

NOTE S.

FOUNDATION OF CHRIST’S HOSPITAL.

(See p. 58.)

“A sermon on charity, preached before King Edward, in the sixth year of his reign, by that venerable martyr, Bishop Ridley, was the instrument under God, in bringing about the foundation of Christ’s Hospital; which, based upon the principles of the Reformation, will be a lasting monument of the blessed effects of the Protestant religion, in the establishment of which its royal founder had taken so conspicuous a part. Arrangements having been fully completed within six months for the reception of 340 children, the young king in the year following, June 1553, received the civic authorities at the palace, and presented them with the

Charter, the children being present at the ceremony.¹ Edward the Sixth lived about a month after signing the incorporation of the Royal Hospitals.

He died of consumption, in the arms of Sir Henry Sidney, 6th July, 1553, in the 16th year of his age, and the 7th of his reign, praying God to receive his spirit, and to defend the realm from papistry. In the foundation of Christ's Hospital, he had provided the surest means under Providence for the success of his prayer, and his life was spared just long enough to greet him with the promise of that harvest which this seminary of sound learning and true religion was destined to yield."—Rev. W. Trollope's Hist. of Christ's Hospital, p. 34—42.

NOTE T.

LADY BACON, THE PRECEPTRESS OF HER SON.

(See p. 58.)

"It was to the great abilities and tender care of so accomplished a parent that her two sons owed the early part of their education; and without

¹ There is a fine picture, by Holbein, in the Hall of Christ's Hospital, descriptive of the scene.

doing any injustice to the genius of either of these great men, we may safely affirm that they were not a little indebted for the reputation they acquired to the pains taken with them by this excellent woman in their tender years, when the mind is most susceptible of learning, and thereby rendered more capable of retaining the principles of science than when they are instilled in an age farther advanced."—*Biographia Britannica*, vol. i. p. 412.

NOTE U.

EXTRACT FROM LORD BURLEIGH'S LETTER TO
HIS SON.

(See p. 61.)

This fact is rendered apparent by a letter of advice from Lord Burleigh to his son, after his mother's decease, which is yet extant. It commences with these striking words: "Son, Robert — The virtuous inclinations of thy matchless mother, by whose tender and godly care thy infancy was governed, together with thy education under so zealous and excellent a tutor, puts me in rather assurance than hope that thou art not igno-

rant of that *summum bonum*, which is only able to make thee happy, as well in thy death as life: I mean the true knowledge and worship of thy Creator and Redeemer, without which all other things are vain and miserable. So that thy youth, being guided by so sufficient a teacher, I make no doubt but he will furnish thy life with divine and moral documents."—Seward's Anecdotes, vol. iv. p. 285.

NOTE V.

RASSELAS, PRINCE OF ABYSSINIA.

(See p. 80.)

"Dr. Johnson told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he composed it in the evenings of one week; sent it to the press in portions, as it was written, and that he had never since read it over. None of his writings have been so extensively diffused over Europe; for it has been translated into most if not all of the modern languages."—Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 185.

NOTE W.

THE POET GRAY.

(See p. 83.)

Of twelve children, Gray was the only one who survived; the rest died in their infancy, from suffocation produced by a fullness of blood; and he owed his life to a memorable instance of the love and courage of his mother, who removed the paroxysm which attacked him by opening a vein with her own hand—an instance of affection that seems to have been most tenderly remembered by him through life, repaid with care and attention, and cherished when the object of his filial solicitude could no longer claim them. “I have discovered,” says the poet, in a letter to Mr. Nichols, “a thing very little known, which is, that in one’s whole life one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this obvious, and a trite observation;—yet I never discovered it (with full confidence and conviction I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday; and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart.”

Gray lost his mother in the year 1753, shortly after the decease of her sister, to whose affection the poet was greatly indebted in childhood; and the epitaph which he wrote on their tomb, is con-

sidered to be exceeded by few in our language, for pathos and simplicity :—

In the vault beneath are deposited
in hope of a joyful resurrection,
the remains of
MARY ANTROBUS.

She died unmarried, Nov. v. MDCCXLIX. aged LXVI.

In the same pious confidence,
beside her friend and sister,
Here sleep the remains of
DOROTHY GRAY,
widow,
The careful tender Mother
of many children, one of whom alone
had the misfortune to survive her.
She died March xi. MDCCCLIII.
aged LXVII.

(See the Life and Writings of Gray, by the Rev. J. Milford.)

NOTE X.

SIR WILLIAM JONES.

(See p. 88.)

The solemn expression of his own persuasion of
the verity and authenticity of the Old and New

Testament, left transcribed by himself in his Bible, is well known, but cannot be too often quoted. “I have carefully and regularly perused these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that the volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity, pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written.” He had endeavoured to discover the best human means of propagating the Gospel throughout India, and two of his projected labours were, Translations of the Psalms into Persic, and the Gospel of St. Luke into Arabic.—Life of Sir Wm. Jones, p. 194.

NOTE Y.

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

(See p. 90.)

Sir Henry Wotton, whose elegant works are known under the title of ‘*Reliquiæ Wottonianæ*,’ was secretary to the Earl of Essex, ambassador from James the First to the republic of Venice, and other Courts, and in his declining years was Provost of Eton College.

NOTE Z.

MODE OF EDUCATION ADOPTED BY MRS. SANDFORD.

(See p. 90.)

Mrs. Sandford was the sister-in-law of Mrs. Chapone, of literary celebrity, and little inferior to her in talent. She was well qualified to supply to her four orphan boys the absence of paternal care. Their mother, however, trusted much more to the natural parts and assiduous habits of her sons, than to the assistance of masters. She used to incarcerate them for a certain number of hours every day, and on their release the task was generally found to have been mastered. On most occasions the boys were on honour, and she had no reason to regret the confidence reposed in them.—*Memoirs of the Right Rev. Dr. Sandford, Bishop of Edinburgh*, p. 6.

NOTE A A.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

(See p. 91.)

Henry Kirke White was the son of a butcher in humble circumstances at Nottingham. At a

very early age, his love of reading was a passion to which every thing else gave way ; yet his mother could not overcome her husband's intention of bringing him up to his own business.

To his mother Henry discovered the cause of his unhappiness ; and that affectionate and excellent parent quickly discerning that he had a mind destined for nobler pursuits, made every possible sacrifice to meet his wish to be brought up to one of the learned professions. Finding his father wholly averse to the plan, from their limited income, she opened a school in Nottingham, whereby her son's home comforts were increased, and she was at length enabled to place him in the office of an attorney.—Southey's *Remains of Kirke White*.

NOTE B B.

QUEEN KATHERINE OF ARRAGON.

(See p. 103.)

She was not only learned herself, but was a patroness of learned men, particularly the great Erasmus, and the celebrated Ludovicus Vives. The latter she constituted tutor for the Latin tongue to her young daughter, the Princess (afterwards Queen) Mary : the former calls her, in his

Epistles, “the best of women,” and observes that she was not only the most pious but the most erudite woman of the time. — Ballard’s Memoirs, p. 20.

NOTE C C.

QUEEN KATHERINE PARR.

(See p. 103.)

“The number as well as the piety of her compositions sufficiently show how much of her time and thoughts, amidst all the business and ceremonies of her station, were employed in securing her own eternal happiness; and implanting the seeds of piety and virtue in the minds of her people. And as she very well knew how far good learning was subservient to these great ends, so she used her utmost endeavours for the establishment and improvement of it. When the act was made, that all colleges, &c. should be in the King’s disposal, the University of Cambridge laboured under terrible apprehensions; and well knowing the Queen’s great affection to learning, they addressed their letters to her, in which they intreated her majesty to intercede with the King

for their colleges, which she effectually performed.—Strype's *Historical Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 133.

NOTE D D.

SIR THOMAS MORE'S HOUSEHOLD.

(See p. 103.)

Sir Thomas More's house was reputed by the literati of Europe, a little academy.

Erasmus in so terming it says,—“there he converseth affably with his family, his wife, his son, and daughter-in-law, his three daughters, and their husbands, with eleven grand-children. You would say there was in that place Plato's Academy; but I do the house an injury in comparing it to Plato's Academy, wherein there was only disputations of numbers and geometrical figures, and sometimes of moral virtues. I should rather call his a school, or university of Christian religion; for there is none therein but readeth or studieth the liberal sciences, and their especial care is piety and virtue.”—More's *Life of Sir Thomas More*, p. 120.

NOTE E E.

BISHOP JEWEL.

(See p. 105.)

This learned and exemplary prelate was employed to repel the accusations brought against the Church of England by the Romanists ; this he performed to the infinite satisfaction of the reformed churches, and to the confusion of her enemies. The people in general having a desire to become acquainted with the contents of a book so valuable at that crisis, this excellent lady undertook the translation of it from Latin into English.—Ballard's Memoirs, p. 134.

NOTE F F.

ERUDITION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

(See p. 108.)

Queen Elizabeth was skilled in the Greek, and spoke the Latin language with fluency. She translated from the former a dialogue of Xenophon, two Orations of Isocrates, and a play of Euripides ; besides which she wrote a commentary on the works of Plato. From the Latin she translated Boethius'

“Consolations of Philosophy,” Sallust’s “Jugurthan War,” and part of Horace’s “Art of Poetry.” On her departure from Oxford and Cambridge (which seats of learning Queen Elizabeth visited in state), she expressed her satisfaction to each in a Latin Oration, and her liberality and countenance were the means of producing many illustrious characters in both of the Universities.—See Birch’s Hist. of Queen Elizabeth—Wood’s Hist. and Antiq. Mis. Oxon. Lib. i. p. 289.—Fuller’s Hist. Cambridge.

NOTE G G.

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF BOHEMIA.

(See p. 112.)

This amiable princess was united to Frederick Count Palatine of the Rhine, afterwards King of Bohemia. Her magnanimity and greatness of mind were fully proved in the misfortunes which marked her eventful career; and her superior intellectual powers are attested by the eminence of her children.

So engaging was her behaviour, that she was in the Low Countries, called “The Queen of Hearts.” From her are descended the illustrious line which

now sway the sceptre of these realms ; Sophia, her youngest daughter,—characterized as the most accomplished lady in Europe,—being mother to George the First, of the Protestant House of Hanover, to whom, by virtue of the Act of Settlement, the Crown of England passed on the decease of Queen Anne.

NOTE H H.

LADY PAKINGTON.

(See p. 113.)

“This most excellent lady, daughter of Lord Coventry, the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and wife of Sir John Pakington, was well known, and celebrated by the best and most learned divines of her time ; yet hardly any pen will be thought capable of adding to the reputation her own hath procured to her, as the author of a work which is not more an honour to the writer than an universal benefit to mankind.”—Ballard’s Memoirs, p. 227.

NOTE II.

MRS. PHILLIPS.

(See p. 120.)

The singularly estimable character of this lady, whose maiden name was Fowler, and who was married about the year 1647, to James Phillips, Esq. of the Priory, Cardigan, may be best estimated by her friendship with Jeremy Taylor, the amiable Bishop Down and Connor; and by the elevated virtues as a wife, and a mother, and rare accomplishments as a woman to which he alludes in a letter printed in his “Polemical and Moral Discourses.”

NOTE K K.

LADY RACHEL RUSSELL.

(See p. 122.)

“I ask no assistance,” said Lord William Russell to the Attorney-general, when placed on his trial, “but that of the lady who sits by me.” At these words the spectators turning their eyes on the daughter of the virtuous Southampton, who rose to assist her husband in his distress, melted into tears.

This illustrious and heroic lady was distinguished by the respect and friendship of Bishops Tillotson, Burnet, and the first persons of the age, in rank, literature, or goodness.—Hume's Hist. England.

NOTE L L.

QUEEN MARY, CONSORT OF WILLIAM THE THIRD.

(See p. 123.)

“Queen Mary was the most universally lamented Princess, and deserved the best to be so, of any in our age or in our history. The female part of the court had been in former reigns subject to much censure, and there was great cause for it; but she freed her court so entirely from all suspicion, that there was not so much as a colour for discourses of that sort.”—Burnet's Own Times, vol. iv. p. 195.

NOTE M M.

MRS. ELIZABETH BURNETT.

(See p. 123.)

The Bishops of Oxford, Worcester, Durham, and several other learned and eminent divines have

left testimonials in their writings of this lady's extraordinary merit, and great learning: the number educated solely at her expense in and about Worcester and Salisbury were about an hundred.—Ballard's *Memoirs*, p. 279.

NOTE N N.

CHARACTER OF ENGLISH LADIES DURING THE REIGN
OF QUEEN ANNE.

(See p. 124.)

“ We are in doubt which most to admire in the women of this reign,—the manners, the talents, or the accomplishments. They were religious without severity and without enthusiasm; they were learned without pedantry; they were intelligent and attractive, without neglecting the duties of their sex; they were elegant and entertaining without levity; in a word, they joined the graces of society to the knowledge of letters, and the virtues of domestic life,—they were friends and companions, without ceasing to be wives and mothers.”—Russell on *Women*, vol. ii. p. 151.

NOTE O O.

THE PHYLACTERY OF MRS. BLAND.

(See p. 125.)

Among the curiosities of the Royal Society is preserved, in Mrs. Bland's own writing, a Phylactery, in Hebrew. Dr. Grew, (who has given a particular account of it) observes the original use of them to be, for mementoes, grounded on the command, Deut. vi. 8. They afterwards served for spells or amulets:—from whence the use of charms amongst Christians was first derived; and those who gave them were Phylacterii. Prohibited by the Council of Trent.

NOTE P P.

CONSTANTIA GRIERSON.

(See p. 126.)

This prodigy of early talents and acquirements, was one of the most extraordinary women that either that age, or perhaps any other, ever produced.

Her parents were poor and illiterate people; yet,

long before her death, at the early age of 27, she was an excellent scholar, not only in classic literature, but in history, divinity, philosophy, and mathematics. She gave a proof of her knowledge of the Latin tongue by her dedication of the Dublin edition of Tacitus to Lord Carteret, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and by that of Terence to his son, to whom she likewise wrote a Greek epigram.—Biog. Fœm.

FINIS.

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